

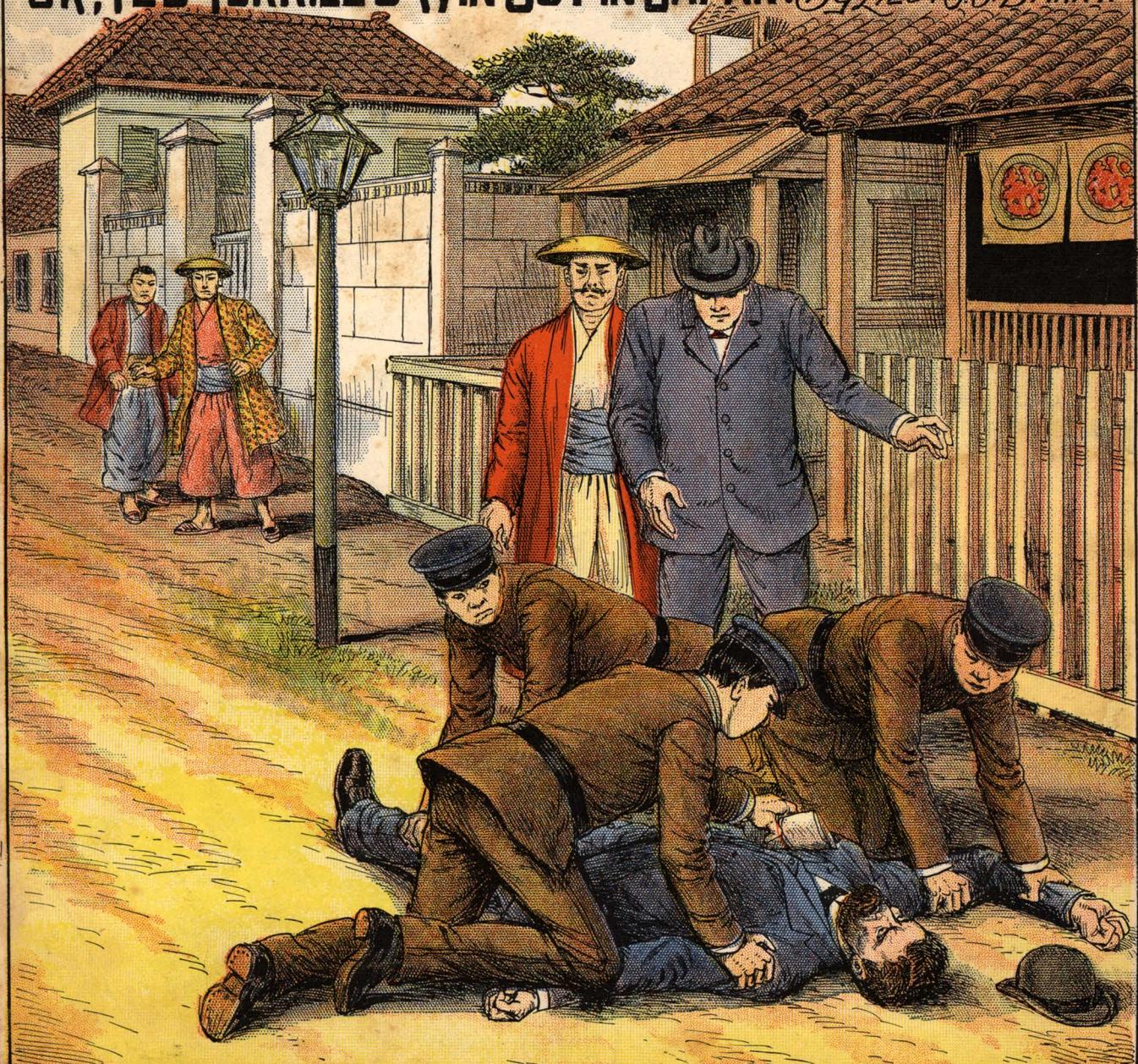
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WIDE AWAKE

A COMPLETE STORY WEEKLY. EVERY WEEK.

BY THE MIKADO'S ORDER;
OR, TED TERRILL'S "WIN OUT" IN JAPAN. *By Lieut. J. J. BARRY.*



"You'll find the naval plans in his inner coat pocket!" cried Ted. Flop! Rovsky was on his back in a jiffy and the papers secured. "You accursed Yankee meddler!" shrieked the Russian. "You have signed your own death warrant!"

WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY

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BY THE MIKADO'S ORDER

OR,

TED TERRILL'S WIN-OUT IN JAPAN

By LIEUT. J. J. BARRY

CHAPTER I.

A MORNING SURPRISE IN TOKIO.

One early September morning, in the year 1906, two youths, walking close together, strolled up the Ginza, as the great thoroughfare is known which might be termed the Broadway of Tokio, the capital of the Japanese Empire.

Here, on this great avenue, where most of the business of Tokio is done, many tall buildings appeared—tall, that is, for the Japanese, being from three to five stories in height.

These "tall buildings" had a most modern look, save for the queer-looking Japanese signs of business houses.

Most of these buildings were of patterns that could be found in New York, or in London, Paris or Berlin.

Here and there, however, between its taller neighbors, stood a squat little Japanese structure, reminding one of older times in what is to-day "up-to-date" Tokio."

Yet, despite the modern look of many if not most of the buildings, there was an abundance of the unusual to attract the eye of the pedestrian.

In the first place, though the Japanese are familiar with our costume, and though there are several tailors in Tokio who furnish it, the average Jap still prefers to wear his own native clothing.

The women, almost without exception, appeared in the picturesque old-time costume.

Most of the women, and many of the men, wore the

"geta," a curious shoe which has a wooden heel and also a wooden toe, both being somewhat like the calks on a horse's shoe, and some two inches high.

When the people walk on these shoes the click-clack over the pavements makes a clatter that it would be hard to describe.

Through the middle of the Ginza ran a solitary surface car line, not heavily patronized.

Most of the people in Tokio, when they do not walk abroad, travel in the jinrikisha, which may be likened to an overgrown two-wheeled baby carriage, with shafts.

The passenger sits in this jinrikisha, while a coolie, almost naked when the weather permits, takes a hitch in between the shafts and starts off at a quick trot, hauling his passenger after him.

There were hundreds of these jinrikishas in sight, all proceeding rapidly but in an orderly way up and down the Ginza.

Thousands of people were out this morning, for it was one of the brightest, sweetest mornings of the year in Tokio.

Every one appeared to be laughing and happy, except, possibly, the keepers of some of the smaller shops.

Ever since the great war with Russia the Japanese have been poor and have dispensed with many of the things that they used to buy.

Hence some of the storekeepers are not as happy as they were in former days.

Yet, despite the falling off in trade, these stores were as filled as ever with the beautiful, artistic and ingenious

wares that the Japanese have manufactured for centuries.

A traveler in Japan feels tempted to spend all the money he has ere he has gone by the first block of stores.

The Japanese themselves have much to do with the traveler's reckless buying.

They are always laughing, always polite, always eager to please. It seems like a shame to refuse to buy of one of these pleasant Japanese.

Add to that the fact that the Japanese women are very pretty and winsome, and that they serve tea in the most engaging way in many of the shops, and you will understand why the foreigner, new to Japan, buys so much of the wonderful goods displayed in the shops.

But the two youths above referred to did not appear to be doing any buying in the shops, nor to have any thoughts along that line.

One was rather tall, broad-shouldered, chestnut-haired, blue-eyed and good-looking—an American youth of about seventeen, named Ted Terrill.

The other youth was shorter, much more slender, black-haired and with kindly, dark-brown eyes—a Japanese youth named, as far as Ted knew, Toko Kama.

Toko wore the native garb, queer little round straw hat and all. The only article of Japanese dress that he did not wear was the geta. Instead, he wore soft-soled shoes.

"Do your people never get glum, Kama?" asked Terrill, calling the Japanese youth by his first name, which the Japanese place after their family name.

"Glum?" answered the Japanese, quickly. "What is that word?"

"Why, it means the same as gloomy, out-of-sorts."

"When our people do not feel right, they do not believe in showing it," Toko Kama answered.

"Unless they happen to get hot, eh?" laughed Ted.

"Hot?"

The Japanese looked puzzled. Though he prided himself on his English Toko Kama was constantly finding that there were words he could not understand.

"Hot is the same thing as angry," Ted explained.

"Oh, when our people are angry," replied Kama, "they certainly would not let any one see it."

"What do they do when they get hot?"

"They simply smile."

"But when they get hotter?"

"Then they smile all the harder."

"And never rip or cuss?"

"There are few profane words in the Japanese language," replied the Japanese, quietly.

"So that when your Jap gets mad he only smiles and keeps on smiling?"

"That is all," replied Toko. "And, pardon me, you do not know it, but the Japanese do not like to be called 'Japs.' They are very foolish, I know, but that word, 'Jap,' from a friend, is very displeasing."

Toko Kama spoke with the utmost gentleness.

Ted flushed slightly, but he answered:

"Thank you, I will remember that and not hurt your feelings again."

"You did not hurt them, Mr. Terrill. I knew that you used the word without thought to offend."

"But are your people never unhappy?" asked Ted, earnestly.

"Sometimes, perhaps, they are unhappy," admitted Toko, slowly.

"I haven't seen one yet who looked it," laughed Ted.

"No."

"The Japanese won't show when they are unhappy. Is that it?"

"They would think it very impolite to annoy others with the signs that they were troubled," replied the smaller youth.

"Then your people always look happy, just as a matter of politeness?" quizzed the American youth.

"Usually a Japanese looks happy because he is so. But only a very impolite Japanese—what you Americans call ill-bred—will let it be seen that he is unhappy over anything."

Ted was thoughtful for some moments. He was getting a new glimpse of the Japanese character.

He had been in Japan only a week.

"Suppose," asked our hero, "that I insult some Japanese, what will he do?"

"He will smile at you."

"And boil inside?"

"More likely he will pity you because you have not been well trained in politeness."

"And if I insult him very much, he will smile all the more?" pressed Terrill.

"You would not insult any one. You are not that kind," smiled Kama, politely.

"No; I am only asking questions—fool questions. If I offered a very severe insult? What would a Japanese do then?"

"It would depend. If your insult was against his parents, a Japanese might even strike you. If you said anything disrespectful about our Emperor, some Japanese might even kill you."

"I shan't, then," laughed Ted. "But if he were not mad why would he hit or kill me?"

"He would strike from a sense of justice."

"Oh, I see!"

"No," said Toko Kama. "No good man can say anything wrong about our Emperor, the Mikado."

"If I struck one of those coolies with a cane," suggested Ted, eyeing a stalwart man between the shafts of a passing jinrikisha, "what would he do?"

"Smile."

"Why?"

"Because he would be too polite to want to let you see that you had wounded his feelings."

"Whew!" gasped Ted. "Yet the Japanese are not cowards. They can fight."

"They can fight, perhaps," half admitted the Japanese,

modestly, "but they are never bullies or quarrelsome. A quarrelsome man cannot be polite. Our Japanese boys, at the public school, are taught good manners before they learn the alphabet. It is a very unkind thing to say to a young Japanese child that he has no manners. He will smile at you, but afterward he will run home fast to ask his father if it is true."

In looking earnestly into his Japanese friend's face, Ted did not see a bevy of four Japanese girls, walking closely grouped, until he had bumped into them, nearly upsetting one of them.

In an instant the American boy's hat was in his hand, his face very red.

"I beg a thousand pardons, young ladies!" he cried.

None of the girls was able to reply in English, but all smiled sweetly, and made low bows.

Then one of them spoke to Kama in Japanese.

"She says," interpreted Toko Kama, "that they were all very stupid to have gotten in your way, and they fear you will have a bad opinion of them. They ask me to beg your pardon for them."

Ted felt like gasping again, for well he knew that he alone was the blunderer.

"Please say to them," he begged, "that I cannot pardon what never was done. That the fault was wholly mine, and that I shall remember all the day how clumsy and neglectful I was."

"They beg you not to feel disturbed. They say that the pleasure is theirs, since it has given them the chance to hear your voice."

"Then tell them, please," urged Ted Terrill, "that I can no longer regret even my stupidity and awkwardness, since through it I have had a second glimpse at the pleasant faces of four such young ladies."

Kama translated. The Japanese maidens laughed, bowed very low, smiling all the while, then clattered away on their resounding getas.

"That's a heap different from a collision on a New York sidewalk," laughed Ted, as the two friends went on their way. "What do you suppose I might have got in New York?"

"I don't know," confessed the Japanese.

"I would have heard some one say: 'Say, do you think you're an automobile wid a dizzy chauffeur?'"

Toko looked puzzled, but asked no questions.

They had not gone a block further up the Ginza when a cry from one of the upper stories of a modern building caused them both to look swiftly up.

A Japanese mother, leaning far out of one of those high-up windows, shrieked in agony as she watched her tiny baby plunge down headlong toward the gutter.

Ted was on the outside of the sidewalk.

One of the two-horse carriages that are rare on the streets of Tokio was coming along close to the sidewalk.

Ted sprang the instant that he saw the infant coming down.

He saw, in a jiffy, that he must risk being run down by the fast-trotting horses, but that did not matter.

To leap into the gutter offered the only chance of saving the baby from death.

So leap Ted did, and wheeled about, heedless of the prancing horses.

Our hero's upstretched arms caught the little one safely, just as the driver pulled the horses enough to the left so that the hubs of the wheels left only their marks of dirt and grease on Ted's knees.

With a glad cry, the mother disappeared from the window.

There was a sound of scurrying feet on the stairs soon, while the carriage drew up beyond and a middle-aged Japanese gentleman looked out of the window of the closed vehicle.

As the mother darted into the street, Ted placed in her arms the baby, which was laughing in glee.

In a twinkling the poor, overjoyed woman sank to her knees, hugging her baby tight, while she poured out a long string of Japanese words, frequently bowing her head close to the sidewalk.

"She is expressing all the thanks that the politest and most grateful Japanese know how to utter," explained Toko Kama.

"Tell her that it is only a trifle, as far as I am concerned," begged Ted, "but that I am now glad that her child fell, since it gave me an opportunity to make her so happy."

"That is very polite," smiled Kama, and turned to the overjoyed little Japanese woman to interpret what his friend had said.

As soon as they could induce the mother to take her child indoors, the two friends were about to push their way onward through the curious, eager, yet very polite and smiling crowd which had gathered.

But a sharp, hissing call from the waiting carriage caught Kama's sharp ears.

"I must beg you to wait a moment, my friend," murmured the little Japanese. "His excellency, the Count Kato, is beckoning that he wishes a word with me."

So Ted backed up against the wall of the building, while the polite Japanese crowd rapidly made itself scarce.

Toko Kama stood for full five minutes talking with the Japanese count.

Then, at last, after a low bow to the nobleman, Toko came gliding back.

"I have, perhaps, what is good news for you," smiled the little Jap, his face aglow with eagerness.

"Yes?" questioned Ted.

"His very distinguished excellency, the Count Kato, who is a very high official in Tokio, saw your quick presence of mind," ran on Toko, "and also your bravery. The count honors us both with the request that we ride with him in his carriage."

"Why, that will be fun!" cried Ted. "Where is he going to take us?"

"To his office, I think, if you are good enough to permit it," replied Kama.

"To his office? What for?"

"Did I not say that his distinguished excellency is a very high official? I think he wishes to talk over some business with you."

"Business? Me?" echoed Ted, his surprise and curiosity getting the better of all other emotions. "What business can he have with me?"

"I am very sure that the count has business to discuss with you," insisted Toko Kama, still smiling. "But I am not privileged to talk about the count's business. Come, we are keeping his very distinguished excellency waiting."

"Just one moment, my friend," begged Ted. "What office does the count hold under the government?"

"Ah, the count will explain much better than I can," came the soft reply. "Come, let us join his excellency before we are suspected of being impolite."

Ted hurried off, at the side of Toko Kama.

But our hero could not help doing some hard wondering.

What could this nobleman and official want of him?

Especially since Count Kato had seen the American do nothing more than take a risk in order to save a child from death?

CHAPTER II.

ROVSKY, THE SPY.

Ted Terrill did his best to make a polite Japanese bow when he found himself being presented to Count Kato.

The count, though a high official, did not wear a uniform, as did so many other high officials in Tokio.

Instead, the count wore a black frock suit, with a small clifrysanthemum in his lapel, and a tall silk hat—such a costume as he could have bought in New York as easily as anywhere.

The count's black hair was just slightly tinged with coming gray.

He was not a tall man, nor stout, either. His weight could not have been above a hundred and twenty pounds.

Yet this man had a look about him that would have stamped him, anywhere in the world, as being a power among men.

With all his smiling politeness, this Japanese nobleman looked the man used to commanding others.

His little eyes, keen and steady, had a way of looking through one at the first glance.

As the two boys stepped into the carriage and occupied the front seat, Count Kato leaned forward, pulling down the curtains on either side.

That queer move mystified our hero not a little.

Another thing that seemed mysterious was that the driver did not come to the door to ask directions.

Instead, the carriage moved away, traveling at a good pace.

Just once, as the blind jostled back a bit, Ted saw that the vehicle was passing through Uyeno Park, the great pleasure resort of the people of Tokio.

"Why, we must be going over to the government buildings, beyond the park," guessed Ted.

All the time a stream of conversation was being kept up.

The count's eyes twinkled in a most kindly way. He either chatted, or listened to his younger companions, until the carriage stopped again.

"Now we will get out, if you please," said the count, talking in fairly good English, as all the educated Japanese do.

Ted alighted, somewhat to his surprise, in a closed courtyard.

Looking across the yard he saw soldier sentries at the gateway.

Our hero had been right in his fleeting guess that they were bound for one of the government buildings.

These great, handsome buildings, past the park, and past the great castle of the Mikado, are too pronounced a feature of Tokio to be mistaken.

"Will you honor me by stepping into my office?" smiled the count.

The two youngsters followed the older man into the building.

As they stepped through the corridors the sentries that they passed all saluted the count with every appearance of the greatest respect.

At last they halted before one of the doors.

A soldier stood vigilantly on guard here.

"This is my office," the count announced. "Will you be pleased to enter."

Count Kato fitted a key in the lock, swung the door open, then followed in after the lads.

It was an ordinary office, such as one might find in any government building in the world.

There was a roll-top desk, a flat desk at some distance from it, two sofas and a dozen chairs.

The floor was carpeted, and two great filing cases and a safe stood against the wall.

That was all, except that at one side of the roll-top desk was a row of electric push-buttons connecting with call-bells in other parts of the building.

A telephone stood on a slide of the roll-top desk.

Placing his tall hat on top of the desk, the count shoved up the roll, then seated himself.

In the meantime Toko Kama had placed chairs for our hero and himself.

And now, as he wheeled around in his chair, the count seemed to forget all his airy politeness.

Instead, he appeared to be the keen-eyed, alert, all but brisk official of the government.

"Your name?" asked the count, picking up a pencil and shoving a pad of paper under the point of the pencil.

"Edward Terrill," replied the American, wondering at this method of beginning an interview.

"First name commonly called Ted," put in Toko.

"Your age?"

"Seventeen," Ned answered.

"You are an American, of course?"

"Yes."

"How do you happen to be in Japan?"

"I am here on a short visit."

"Business, or sight-seeing?" asked the count, quickly.

"Sight-seeing," Ted answered, the mystery connected with all these questions growing in his own mind.

"Ah, your father is wealthy, then?" questioned the count.

"I wish he was," Ted smiled.

"You have some means, then?"

"Only the little pocket-money that my father gave me."

"Then how are you able to leave America and come 'way over here?"

"I don't live in the United States," Ted replied, smiling.

"Ah! Where, then?"

Count Kato spoke sharply, and looked sharply, as if this question were very important.

"My father, Asa Terrill, is an American citizen, a school teacher. The United States government sent him to Manila to be principal of one of the grammar schools there. So my father took me to the Philippines with him. A fortnight ago he gave me money for a little visit in Japan. That was all the more possible as my father was able to get passage to Japan for me on one of our American army transports."

"You are in the employ of the American government?" asked the count, quickly, looking a shade disappointed, too, Ted thought.

"Not yet," answered the lad.

"What do you mean by that?"

"Why, I am not in the American government employ at Manila, but I am fitting for a position in the civil service later on."

"Oh! Ah!" The count was smiling again.

"Do you know the American ambassador to Japan?" was the count's next question.

"I do not."

"Have you any papers—anything to prove who you are? A passport, let us say?"

"A passport? No. But I have the government pass given me for my trip on the United States Army transport Buford."

"Will you let me see it?"

What on earth did all these questions mean?

"The count talks as if I were a prisoner under arrest," fidgeted the boy.

But he dug into an inner pocket, drew forth his pocket-book, and from that took the transport pass furnished him by the ranking quartermaster officer of the army at Manila.

Not only do American officials in the Philippines travel free on the army transports, but so, also, do members of their families.

"Ah, this is excellent; as good as a passport—better!" beamed Count Kato, as he scanned the little slip of paper.

"Now, Ted Terrill, you are not rich?"

"If I am, no one ever told me about it."

"Would you like to earn some money? A fairly large sum?"

"Why," laughed Ted, "that is just the same as asking a hungry man if he cares about anything to eat."

"What would you do to get a large sum of money?" pursued the count.

"Anything that was square and honest."

"Would you enter the service of the Japanese government?"

"Would I?" echoed Ted. "Why, I'd be tickled to death!"

Count Kato surveyed this quick-speaking lad for some moments in attentive silence.

Then the little brown man leaned forward, looking keenly into the American boy's eyes.

"Would you—enter the secret police service of the Mikado?"

Ted leaned back in his chair, gasping, somewhat, in his surprise.

"Would you?" persisted the count.

"That would depend."

"It would not depend upon the danger, would it?" asked the count, smiling. "Half an hour ago you did not seem to mind the danger of being run down by my carriage."

"No; I wouldn't think of the danger," Ted answered, honestly. "But I wouldn't want to do a lot of—well, dirty work."

"But if the work were honorable, and served the Japanese government? If your work helped preserve us from our enemies?"

"If the work is honorable and square, I'll take it and go as far as you like," Ted promised, bluntly.

"I was attracted by what you did on the Ginza," went on the count. "It showed me that you had presence of mind and courage. From your being with Toko Kama I thought you must be an honorable young man—what you Americans call a gentleman. We need such a young man in our police service for certain work that a Japanese could not do. Would you take the work? There will be a large reward if you succeed. It is work ordered by our august Mikado himself."

"I'll take it," Ted agreed, out of hand. He liked the looks of Kato better and better every moment.

"Then stand up, raise your right hand and take the oath of loyalty to our Emperor!" cried Count Kato, himself rising and lifting a hand.

But Ted, though he rose, as suddenly recoiled.

"Hold on," he said, huskily. "I'm an American. Don't forget that. My first loyalty, at all times, goes to the United States of America!"

"But I like you none the less for that answer," smiled the count. "Your oath of loyalty to the Mikado lasts only as long as you serve in our secret police. At no time does this oath go ahead of your duty to your country."

Ted solemnly held up his hand, repeating the words of a most solemn oath.

"You realize what you have sworn?" queried the count.

"Do I?" shivered the boy. He had sworn to defend the Emperor's interests, though at the greatest risk of life, safety or happiness.

"This is no light promise," went on the count. "Sit down."

Again our hero sank into a chair, wondering if he were dreaming.

"Now, then," continued Kato, "we want you to make the acquaintance of one Rovsky, a Russian."

"A Russian!"

"A spy of the Russian government, now here in Tokio."

"But you are now, after one of the world's bloodiest wars, at peace again with the Russians!"

"That," replied Kato, "does not prevent the Russian government from flooding our country with their spies. And the Russians are the best spies in the world! Unfortunately, but very few of the Russian spies in this country are Russians. Otherwise we would very quickly find them all."

"So you, Count Kato, are an officer of the Mikado's secret police?"

"I command the secret police in Tokio."

"And you, Toko—" went on Ted, turning, but stopped.

For Toko Kama had silently slipped out of the office.

"Toko is in the secret police?" murmured the boy.

"You may think what you like," smiled the count.

"A week ago I made his acquaintance. Since then we have been together most of the time. Has he been studying me, to see if I was fitted for your work, Count Kato?"

The chief of secret police smiled as he answered:

"You seem to forget, Ted Terrill, that I should do the questioning—not you. You are now a member of our secret police—one of the foreign members that we often find it necessary to employ. You are ready for your orders?"

"Yes," Terrill responded.

But he was strongly tempted to rub his eyes and pinch himself.

Somehow, without quite meaning it, and without taking time to think, he had allowed himself to be sworn into the service of the Emperor of Japan.

"If the Japs can rush everybody the way they rushed me," he murmured, inwardly, "it's no wonder that they get ahead while other nations are waking up."

"We know," continued Count Kato, "that one Ivan Rovsky, whom you will meet presently, is a member of the Russian secret police. We suspect that he is in this country to get copies of Japan's new naval plans, which might be of the greatest value to Russia.

"Rovsky would not steal these plans himself. He would have no chance to. But he will seek to employ others to do it. Very likely he will not handle our naval plans at all, but he may find a means to have them stolen, and he may attend to getting them out of this country to Russia.

"Now, then, Ted Terrill, this Rovsky, who pretends not to admire the Russian government at all, is a member of the Foreigners' Club. We will find a member of that club who will introduce you there and propose you as a member.

"There you will meet Ivan Rovsky, and there you must

make his most thorough acquaintance. You must learn who his associates are in this plot to steal our naval plans. Will you do it?"

Ted noticed in a flash that Kato did not ask "can you do it?" but "will you do it?"

One of the secrets of the success of the Japanese government is that it does not admit of any impossibilities.

"I'll do it," Ted promised, but his voice was husky.

"You understand, Ted Terrill," pursued the count, "that it will very likely cost you your life if Rovsky guesses that you belong to our secret service."

"I can understand that."

"The Russian spy system is the best in the world!"

"So I have heard, Count."

"There are Russian spies enough in Tokio to make your death certain, if once they suspect that you are working against them."

"I can believe that," the boy murmured.

"And you are not afraid?"

In a twinkling Ted rose to his feet, drew himself up to his tallest and made answer, simply:

"Afraid? I am an American."

Count Kato laughed.

"You Americans have never yet deserved to be called cowards," he admitted.

"I am ready to meet your Rovsky. He speaks English, I presume, or you would not think of sending me on his trail."

Count Kato nodded.

Then, for some minutes, the two talked on.

In the first place, as it would not do for our hero again to come to the count's office, a system of communication, including the private number of the count's telephone, was arranged.

The matter of Ted's pay in the Mikado's services was also touched upon.

That pay was not so bad, while "expense money" was also allowed.

"Now, go down to the Foreigners' Club," wound up the count. "You will find Mr. Bowen, an Englishman, awaiting you. He will know you, and will introduce you into the club and put up your name for membership."

"Is this Mr. Bowen in your secret service?" asked Ted, incautiously.

"I do not know," replied Kato, with a cool smile and a shrug of his shoulders. "Bowen will introduce you to Rovsky."

"Are these all of my instructions, count?"

"All for the present. Now, go; and when you have something to communicate to me, you know how it is to be done. Go! Perform your task—by order of the Mikado! And success to you!"

Ted drew himself up, honoring Count Kato with a good old American army salute.

Then, turning on his heel, the American boy left the room.

Outside he was stopped by a smiling Japanese officer in uniform.

"Follow me, by Count Kato's order," commanded this little officer.

Ted obeyed, following the officer down into a basement.

Thence they went underground for some distance.

When they came up to street level again they faced a door.

"I go no further," smiled the little Japanese officer. "On the other side of this door you will pass through the throng, go outside, hire a jinrikisha and go on your way. It is well. Good-by!"

Ted had only to turn the handle of the door and pass on.

He found himself now in one of the rooms of the post-office department, a department to which foreigners always are admitted.

His presence here aroused no curiosity among the few Americans and Europeans who were there sight-seeing.

Stepping to one of the street doors, Ted signalled an unemployed coolie with a jinrikisha.

"You know Foreigners' Club?" queried Ted.

"Hai!" (yes) replied the coolie.

"Take me there."

Ted was whirled away through a succession of short streets.

It was not so very far to go, and ere long Terrill found himself gliding in through the gateway of that well-known club of Tokio.

The club building is a low, two-story affair, half Japanese in style, and surrounded by a broad veranda.

As the jinrikisha slowly approached the entrance, a broad, red-faced Englishman rose from one of the chairs.

He came forward, down the steps, hand outstretched and his face beaming with good nature.

"Hullo, Terrill!" was his greeting. "Glad to see you."

"Same to you, Bowen," Ted replied, almost off-handedly.

These two had never seen each other before, but their introduction had been arranged over the telephone.

"Come in, and I'll post you up for a guest," proposed the Englishman.

Ted was led to the clerk's desk and introduced.

"And now we'll put you up for membership, old man," proposed Bowen. "I'll propose you, and I'll find a good man to second your nomination, for I want you to be in this club. Come along, old chap, while I find a seconder for you."

Arm-in-arm, Ted and the Englishman passed through some of the rooms of the clubhouse.

In a smoking-room were several of the members, some of them playing cards.

But one of them sat alone, seemingly absorbed in a French newspaper.

"I say, Rovsky, old man," shot out Bowen, suddenly, halting our hero before this member, "I want you to know my good friend, young Terrill, of Manila."

Thrusting his newspaper behind him in his chair, Ivan

Rovsky was on his feet in an instant, extending his right hand and bowing.

"Mr. Terrill," said the Russian, in good English, "I am doubly glad to meet you from the fact that you are Bowen's friend."

"Always take what a Russian tells you with just a grain of salt," laughed Bowen, good-humoredly.

"Why cannot you forget that I am a Russian, Bowen?" protested Rovsky, as he and Ted shook hands. "I prefer, greatly, to be known as a citizen of the world."

In that swift instant Ted Terrill, through half-closed, smiling eyes, had had a good opportunity to size up this Russian.

Rovsky was not very tall, nor of great breadth of shoulder.

Yet his frame denoted great and wiry strength.

But his eyes were the most remarkable thing about him.

Though those eyes usually looked half drowsy, Ted caught just a gleam of a flash in them at that instant.

"Kato was right," murmured the boy to himself. "This Russian is just the sort of man to play a game to the finish. He would kill the opponent who got the better of the game, too! He is a sharp, clever man, who has been everywhere and has seen much. Can I hope to match such an experienced man of the world?"

But in the next instant there flashed into the American boy's resolute mind the impulsive declaration:

"I will match him! And I'll beat him—by order of the Mikado!"

"You are going to sit down and chat with me a while?" questioned the Russian, genially.

"Awfully sorry, old chap," explained the Englishman. "But I have an appointment. Just sign this card, proposing Terrill for membership, will you, and I'll have the clerk post it up at the desk. Have a good time, Terrill. You'll find Rovsky one of the most delightful fellows in the club. Now, good-by, both of you, for a little while."

Bowen walked away, leaving the American boy and his destined prey together.

CHAPTER III.

THE YELLOW PERIL IN THE WOOD-PILE.

"Delightful place, this Japan," murmured Rovsky to our hero.

"Oh, it's all right for a cute little show country," assented Ted, carelessly.

"What! You have not fallen in love with the people?" cried the Russian.

"Not especially," lied Ted.

"I am astonished beyond words," murmured the Russian, raising his eyebrows. "Most newcomers here rave over the wonderfulness of the Japanese."

"Oh, I've got nothing against the people," said Ted, half grumbly. "The people are all right, I guess, and so is the country. But I like my own people the best—the white men. In the war between Japan and Russia all my sympathies were with Russia."

That was a whopper, but Ted felt that, under the circumstances, his conscience could stand it.

"What is your grievance against Japan, may I ask?" queried Rovsky, looking curiously at the American.

"Well, in the first place, I don't like the people very well. They make me think of a lot of stuck-up little bantams. But my worst grouch, I suppose, is that I can't seem to make a win-out in this country."

"Ah, you came here to go into business?" asked the Russian, regarding our hero, attentively.

"I came to try to."

"And you can find nothing?"

"So far I haven't been able to find even a look-in. M. Rovsky, since you are to second me for membership in this club," Ted went on, with what he meant to have look like engaging frankness, "I may as well tell you the truth. The money that I shall spend to enter this club will be about the last few dollars that I have left in the world."

"Then, why do you join, Mr. Terrill? Why spend the money?"

"It seems to be my only hope."

"Of what?"

"Well, M. Rovsky, I am in hopes that here at the club I shall become acquainted with foreigners who may be able to put me in the way of something to keep body and soul together. I came here to Japan—I don't mind saying it—with every hope of making my fortune here. Now, I shall be satisfied to do well enough to keep alive while I'm saving the money to buy my ticket to some other country."

"What other country?" asked the Russian, softly.

"Hanged if I care much. Only it must be some other country than Japan!" exploded Ted Terrill.

Rovsky laid a hand over one of the boy's.

"My young friend, don't get downhearted so soon. I have known others to come to Japan, and to feel that way at first. But something will surely turn up. I may be able to help you to it myself."

"Oh, if you only could!" breathed the boy, looking eagerly at his new acquaintance.

"Very likely I can. Terrill, I am hungry. If you are at all of the same mind, suppose we sample one of the club's lunches?"

Ted murmured his thanks.

The Russian, rising, led the way to one of the small, private dining-rooms on the floor above.

It was an excellent meal, cooked in the European style. Ted did full justice to the food while listening to his companion, who seemed to be unusually well informed on matters connected with all parts of the world.

"You have traveled much," sighed Ted. "I have often wanted to see more of the world. Your own country, Russia, is one of the countries that I have wanted much to see."

"But you have traveled, too, Terrill, for you are far from the States."

"I have been only to Manila before coming here," Ted informed him.

"You had business at Manila?"

"My father had. But he and I had a row, and so I quit him. He's a hard, crabbed old fellow. (Ted groaned, inwardly, as he uttered this lie about his only living parent). Do you know," the boy went on, laughing lightly, "sometimes I feel as if I'd really enjoy doing something truly disgraceful, just to get even with the old man!"

Again the Russian eyed the boy curiously.

"You're thinking that I'm a little beast, a savage," grumbled the boy.

"Oh, no," smiled the Russian. "But I am interested. I have met many other young men who hated the world at your age."

"Did they grow to like the world later on?" Ted questioned.

"Some of them did—the smarter ones."

"I hope I shall be one of the smarter ones," sighed Ted. "It would take something like a big success to make me care much for this rusty old world of ours."

"It is a queer world," admitted the Russian, thoughtfully. "Nowadays, it almost seems as if one could not succeed unless he did something that jarred a keen conscience."

"I'm afraid again that you'll think me a beast," grimaced Ted. "I don't want you to get the impression, M. Rovsky, that I'd betray a friend or kill a fellow-passenger for the sake of getting at his pocketbook. But I'm speaking the truth when I say that I wouldn't be over-particular as to how I made my success. Isn't that a bad frame of mind to be in?"

M. Rovsky's eyes were more than half closed, but our hero was well aware that those eyes were watching the American's face rather closely.

"A bad frame of mind?" repeated the Russian. "Oh, I'm not sure. It would all depend on where such a frame of mind left you."

A meaningless "game of talk" this might seem, but Ted was cleverly and artfully trying to lead the Russian to look upon him as a young man who could be bought to do questionable things for the hope of gain.

The Russian, if his plans were not yet fully made, might be betrayed into trusting Ted Terrill through the hope of being able to use him.

If the Russian wanted, for instance, to engage some one to carry important papers out of Japan, he might be induced to look upon our hero as a messenger who could be trusted in such work if the reward were high enough.

The meal had been removed, and Rovsky was lingering over a cigar, our hero having declined to smoke.

"Perhaps," laughed the Russian, lightly, as if it were a joke, "one of these days I may be able to do something to help you on. I am, at heart, something of a pirate myself."

"If you can," cried Ted, with pretended earnestness, leaning forward and resting one of his hands in Rovsky's, "please don't forget me! The way I feel now, when I'm so down on my luck, I'd do simply anything to get on in

the world. To have a roof securely over my head! To have better clothes, more food to eat, to have money in the bank! In other words to feel that I had some real object in living!"

Terrill was an admirable actor.

The Russian looked at him, half laughing, but taking in the boy's evident desperation.

"Have good cheer, my young friend," Rovsky cried lightly. "Even yet you and I may walk the deck of a pirate ship."

"Pirates are gone by—a thing of the past!" sighed Ted, as if he regretted it. "But there are still, I suppose, some good things left in the world for those who are desperate enough to fight for them."

"Beyond a doubt," agreed the Russian.

The Japanese waiter who had served their meal now entered with a card.

Rovsky glanced at it in annoyance, and looked as if he were about to deny himself to his caller.

But just then that caller pushed his way in at the door, and the waiter was discreet enough to go out and close the door behind him.

Ted's back was toward the door as the visitor entered.

But he heard the Russian's greeting:

"Ah, my good friend, you come just too late to give us the pleasure of your company at table. Terrill, shake hands with a good fellow, who is a Japanese. Mr. Matu Sato, of the Japanese—Navy Department, I believe, is it not, Sato?"

"Sato of the Navy Department? Then this must be the traitor through whom Rovsky schemes to get the Japanese naval plans!" throbbed Ted Terrill.

Our hero steeled himself to hide his astonishment.

Under pretense of turning slowly, the young American got the best grip he could on his face and his feelings.

Then he rose and turned, extending his hand swiftly in greeting.

"Mr. Sato, I am honored by this meeting!"

But Ted's hand never reached the other's.

He drew back, in some astonishment, as did the individual whom Rovsky had named as Sato.

Ted and the Oriental, who appeared to be about thirty years of age, stood looking at each other curiously, as if measuring each other up for the fight.

Sato's eyes glinted dangerously.

Ted was busy trying to drive every bit of tell-tale expression out of his face.

"Oh, you must pardon me," gasped Ted, at last. "It was a resemblance, Mr. Sato, that wholly deceived me for the instant."

"You mistook me for some one else?" queried the Japanese, thickly.

"Yes, I admit that I did."

"For whom?" insisted Sato.

"I thought at first glance, though now I see I was mistaken, that you were a person I had seen once in Manila."

"He was a Japanese?" asked the Oriental, quickly.

"No; a Chinaman."

"His name?"

Sato fairly hissed this question.

Ivan Rovsky looked on in all but bewildered amazement.

"His name?" repeated Ted. "I—I am afraid I have forgotten it for the moment."

"Think!"

"I cannot remember it, Mr. Sato."

"Think!"

"It is useless," spoke Ted, as coolly as he could. "The name has gone from me."

"Was it——"

Sato leaned forward, pausing as if prompting the American.

"I can't think of the name, I tell you."

"Would you know the name of that Chinaman if you heard it now?"

"I might."

"Was it—Kong Tow?"

Ted saw that there was no use in pretending stupidity any longer.

"That was the name!" he clicked.

Nor had any name been more despised in Manila a few months before.

Kong Tow was an under-sized, clever, rascally Chinaman who had done his best to stir up rebellion among the native Filipinos.

Kong had been arrested, after he had raised among the natives some forty thousand dollars with which to buy arms to start a rebellion against the United States.

Caught and arrested, Kong would have served many a year in prison, but he had mysteriously escaped.

Here he had shown up again in Japan, this time pretending to be a native Japanese.

So far had Kong Tow deceived the government officers that now he was a trusted employee at the Navy Department.

And he was also M. Rovsky's ally, spy or tool.

Most likely it was upon Kong Tow, alias Matu Sato, that Rovsky relied for the safe stealing of the plans.

Had it not been that Ted had put in a day at the trial of Kong Tow at Manila, he would not have known this transformed Chinaman now.

But now there could not be the shadow of a doubt.

The false Chinaman himself had daringly proclaimed his own true identity.

"What little comedy is this being played before my eyes?" cried Rovsky, jeeringly.

"I admit that I don't understand it," Ted replied, choking down a lump in his throat. "Perhaps Mr. Sato will make his very remarkable words clear."

The bad Chinaman turned to Rovsky with:

"I can no longer hope to conceal my history, for this American will betray me. I am not a Japanese, but a Chinaman, a fugitive from Manila. This American will betray me, and I shall be sent back there—to prison."

"You do me an injustice!" cried Ted, shrugging his shoulders. "Kong Tow, Sato, or whatever your name is,

your affairs are no concern of mine. I have no reason to wish you any harm. I have all the more reason to wish you well, if you are a friend of M. Rovsky."

"You lie!" hissed the detected Chinaman.

He was small of stature, with his queue shaved off and a bushy head of black hair in its place. His color was more that of the Japanese than of the Chinaman. Altogether, Kong Tow made a very presentable Jap.

"M. Rovsky," smiled the American boy, showing his teeth, "if this man were not your friend he would stand a very good chance of being badly thrashed."

But Kong Tow stood glaring with open suspicion at our hero.

Suddenly the Chinaman's hand reached inside his vest.

Then there was a flash of steel as Kong Tow leaped forward with such force as to hurl Ted Terrill to the floor.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BEST SPY SYSTEM IN THE WORLD.

M. Rovsky seemed to have been taken as much by surprise as had been Ted Terrill.

But now the Russian bent over, snarling:

"Sato, if you strike that knife in I'll brain you! You know whether I mean it!"

One of Kong Tow's hands gripped prostrate Ted at the throat.

His other hand held the point of the knife close to that same throat.

Ted hardly dared to struggle, for this wild Chinaman could have finished him in an instant.

"You know how much I have at stake, Rovsky!" growled the pretended Jap.

"You have, but I have more," Rovsky warned him.

"Rovsky," growled the Chinaman, "you are more and more of a fool. Now, this American, if we let him go, could hang us both!"

Both these plotters spoke English well.

Nearly all of these spies that serve the great nations of the world are men of education as well as of wide experience.

Most of the spies, in fact, are educated men who have failed in other lines, and who have at last come to find profit, if not honor, in betraying the secrets of one country to another government.

Men who travel always in the dread of the halter, they have need to be brave. They can be desperate at a pinch, since they always travel with their lives in their hands.

"Don't dare to strike—yet—Sato," warned the Russian, still using the Japanese name of the scoundrel. "Wait! We may have a useful man here, instead of an enemy!"

"You get me, you two!" grumbled Ted. "What do you think I am? A commissioner for all the governments of the earth? Rovsky, is this the piracy you promised me? If it is, I'm ready for it. But I ought to have a fair show. Let me on my feet, with a knife also. Or else pull off this yellow terrier and draw his teeth!"

Ted spoke banteringly, lightly, as if he were not afraid. In fact, he began to have high hopes that the Russian would see fit to rescue him from this very lively specimen of "the yellow peril."

"Terrill," half growled the Russian, "listen to me."

"Just gamble that I'm listening," begged Ted, cheerfully.

"You realize now that Sato and I are engaged in something desperate?"

"It looks to me more like a cinch," mimicked Ted, "if you're talking about this attack on me."

"But I'm not!"

"Then go ahead and explain."

"You seem to know Sato's—Kong Tow's—record in Manila."

"Yes; if this is really Kong Tow."

"Then you are smart enough to guess that he and I are playing the double game between governments."

"Any money in it?" demanded Ted, eagerly.

"Why do you ask that?"

"Because, Rovsky," declared the American boy, "I am hoping that, if there is, you'll look upon me with favor as a candidate for your crowd. I'll keep my mouth shut just for the sake of my life. If there's any money in it I'll join you in the game and play it straight through to any limit. But, first of all, keel-haul this Japanese-Chinaman off me. He sits heavily on my chest. And I know Kong-Tow-Matu-Sato must be a good fellow at heart, once you get to know him."

Ivan Rovsky turned suddenly toward the door, rising as he went.

He turned the key, dropped the key in his pocket, then came back to the pair on the floor.

Resting a hand on the Chinaman's shoulder, the Russian commanded:

"Let him up, Sato. He can't get away, anyway. We can talk better when we sit as friends around the table."

"You are a fool, Rovsky," growled the Chinese spy.

"At least," muttered the Russian, in a curious voice, "you must be aware that I command. Put up your knife and let the American get on his feet once more."

As the Chinaman obeyed, though with the plainest reluctance, Ted hopped up, brushed some of the dust from his clothing, and looked in turn at the two men, grinning understandingly.

"Rovsky," whispered the boy, "I'm beginning to hope that that pirate ship of ours is coming in earlier than you had given me any reason to expect."

"Sit down at the table with us," growled the Russian. Ted walked to the chair indicated and occupied it.

Rovsky and Kong Tow seated themselves on either side of him.

"Remember," growled the Chinese spy, "that I'm still holding the knife—on my knee."

"Oh, forget it!" retorted Ted, contemptuously. "Keep still and let us hear what our good-natured Russian has to say."

"Have you ever been in the employ of the American government?" demanded Rovsky, looking straight into the young American's eyes.

"No; my dad is, that's all."

"In the police department?"

"No; my dad is a school teacher at Manila. And he and I are on the outs now."

"Is all your dislike for Japan the mere moughings of a busybody?" demanded Rovsky, the danger lights playing in his eyes.

"Oh, the dickens with Japan, or any other country. I'm out for Ted Terrill, and nothing else. I can understand now, Rovsky, that you and this—Mr. Sato—are out on some kind of a game together. I don't know whether you're working for Russia, or China, England or the Congo Free State, and I don't care a hang, either. If there's anything in it that I can do for money, let me into it and I'll go through to the end with all the nerve of a fellow who doesn't care for life much, anyway. If you don't want me in this scheme of yours, why, then, I'd just a little rather that you let me out without cutting me to bits, for I've got a notion, Rovsky, that you may be able to serve me in some way. For that reason, if for no other, you can depend upon me to keep my mouth shut."

"Talk, and cheap talk at that," sneered Kong Tow.

"Now, what have you got against me?" demanded Ted, coolly, as he turned a smiling face toward the suspicious Chinese spy.

"This American will betray us," glared Kong. "The Americans love neither the Chinese nor the Russians. Every American is, at heart, the strong friend of Japan."

Ted laughed softly, as if this were the best way to deny the charge of any especial friendliness toward the Japanese.

"Rovsky," murmured the American boy, jestingly, "I had some hope, a moment ago, that you were going to turn out a sincere pirate. Now, I am inclined to believe that, if you listen too much to this Chinaman you will wind up by being an old woman instead of a bold spirit such as I took you for."

"Kong," whispered the Russian, "you are making us both look very silly indeed."

The Chinaman snorted impatiently.

"Let me sound our young friend," the Russian went on. "I am not often deceived. Terrill, just how clever do you think you are?"

Our hero looked straight into the Russian's eyes, as if trying to impress with his frankness.

"Rovsky, I don't really know just how clever I could be. I've never had a chance to find out. But, like all young fellows, I suppose I imagine I could perform wonders if a kind fate threw the chance my way."

"You are not lacking in courage."

"Thank you."

"If you had been, you would have weakened when Kong seemed on the point of stopping your breathing with his piece of steel."

"Oh, I suppose I was born with a fair share of nerve,"

Ted smiled, lightly. "Now, to be perfectly honest with you, Rovsky, I'm not wholly without experience."

"What kind of experience?" asked the Russian, quickly.

"Well, I've had just one throw at the game of being a spy against a government."

Rovsky started slightly, but tried to conceal the fact.

"Go on, Terrill, but no boasting, mind you."

"Oh, there was nothing to boast about," laughed Ted, carelessly.

He paused, in order to think out swiftly what kind of a yarn he should tell to these two men who were eyeing him so closely.

"Do you remember the last revolution in Venezuela, against President Castro?" our hero asked.

"No."

"Well, it wasn't so much of a revolution, since it didn't win. But at that time the revolutionists in one of the States of Venezuela wanted to get some money and papers out of the country, to New York. The papers were lists of the arms and ammunition that they wanted for fighting Castro. The money was to pay for the supplies. I was down there in Venezuela. I had been working on a steamer, and had deserted. It isn't necessary to tell you how I got acquainted with some of the revolutionists in that State. But they had to have some messenger to send up to New York with the orders and the money."

"It looked like an easy job, and I jumped when it was offered to me. It would have been easy enough, for an American wasn't likely to be suspected. But some traitor in the camp gave me away. Three times I fell into the hands of Castro's soldiers. Each time, however, I had just enough warning to be able to hide the papers and the money. I came near being shot on general principles. But——"

"Well? Go on!"

"I got to New York all right with the papers and the money."

"What happened then?" demanded Rovsky.

"The Venezuelan I turned the money over to forgot his obligations to his comrades down in his native country. He skipped to Europe with the money. But that was no concern of mine. I got the money and the papers as far as I was paid to do."

"It was a mission of danger," said Rovsky, slowly.

"It never happened," jeered Kong Tow.

But Ted turned to him with a cool, amused smile.

"My Chinese friend, you and I might have trouble if I were as quarrelsome as you seem to be."

"Let him alone, Kong," ordered Rovsky. "I begin to think that our young American is all right. If he is, he would be useful to us—perhaps."

"He is a boaster and a fool," snarled the Chinaman.

Ted glanced down in time to see the point of the Chinaman's knife stealing slowly toward his waist-line.

In a jiffy the young American leaped to his feet, darting back to the wall.

"Rovsky," he hissed, "if anything ever makes me turn on you it will be the antics of this wild Chinaman!"

"Stop, you fool!" ordered the Russian, sternly, seizing Kong by the shoulder and drawing him back. "Don't you realize the young man could shout out now if he wanted to betray us? He could summon help and then what would intruders find? Why, that I, who am known to be a Russian, am closeted with a man supposed to be a Japanese, and an attache at the Naval Department. Would you ruin everything, Kong?"

"You've got some sense," nodded Ted. "But this Chinaman is so wild that he'd spoil any good game. Can't even a Chinaman realize that, if I wanted to betray you, all I have to do now is to let out a yell for help?"

"Of course," agreed the Russian, anger in his voice. "Kong, you're well enough in your place, and clever, but remember that I am in charge of this work. You are to follow orders. Give me that knife of yours."

But the Chinaman, as the Russian advanced toward him, drew back, thrusting the weapon behind his back.

"Well, keep it, then," growled Rovsky, "but keep it out of sight."

Then, as the Chinaman replaced the knife in its hiding place under his vest, the Russian went on:

"Now, you two shake hands and act like sensible human beings."

Ere long they were seated again around the table, the Russian and the yellow man smoking.

"Terrill," announced Rovsky, while Kong Tow scowled, "I'm going to trust you as I believe you ought to be trusted in any adventurous work. Don't have too much of a grudge against Kong, though. He is working hard for our cause, as he sees it. Now, I'm not going to tell you much about our plans as yet, my boy, for it wouldn't do any good. It'll be about ten days yet before we can do anything. Since you're going to join this club, why, just stay around here and pretend to be enjoying yourself and nothing else. You'll be here, then, whenever I need to talk business to you. Here is the money that it will cost you to join the club, and here's some more to spend while you're waiting orders. Is that satisfactory?"

Clink! clink! clink! Little Japanese ten-dollar gold pieces, of the size and value of ours of five dollars, were being counted on the table.

"How generous you are!" murmured Ted, in pretended gratitude, as he swept the money into his pocket.

"You think so?" smiled the Russian. "You'll know more about real gratitude when our task is done and the real reward comes in!"

The Russian's tone was so friendly and trustful that Ted felt very close to being ashamed of the part that he was playing in the undoing of this cordial Russian.

But young Terrill did not know the wily friendliness of the Russian spy abroad—the spy who betrays and ruins without a twinge of conscience.

"Now we will shake hands on our alliance!" cried Rovsky, offering his hand.

They clasped and shook.

Then, with a pretence of friendliness worthy of the Russian himself, Ted turned to the Chinaman.

"Kong, I'll shake hands even with you, and have a better opinion of you, if you'll keep your knife out of sight in the future."

The Chinaman laughed in an almost growling fashion as he extended his yellow, claw-like hand.

"I'm glad to see you two friends," nodded Rovsky, beamingly. "I may have to depend upon you two most of all."

"Let me whisper in your ear," begged Kong, rising.

He and the Russian talked in whispers, in a corner of the room, for some minutes, Ted pretending that he was not in the least interested.

"Do not be in too much of a hurry," our hero heard the Russian advise, shaking his head as he turned away from the Chinaman.

"I go now," wound up Kong Tow.

But the yellow man came back, first of all, to shake hands with our hero.

"We shall understand each other better, after this," nodded Ted, smilingly.

Then he and Rovsky had the room to themselves again. For some moments our hero looked rather fixedly at the Russian. Then he broke forth:

"My friend, I'm not going to ask what you're up to, but when you need me I believe you will find me a young man of speed and courage."

"I am sure of it," came the seemingly cordial answer.

"Are you going to need me this afternoon?"

"Not at all," replied Rovsky.

"Then I'm going out a little while. There are a few things I've wanted for some days. Now that I have the money, thanks to you, I might as well get them."

"Go ahead, my dear young friend."

Just beyond the gate of the club grounds there were several jinrikishas for hire.

Ted chose one of these, giving the address of a little shop not far off.

Here he hastily purchased an article and left, going to a second shop.

Here, also, after a little, he made a purchase.

"If Rovsky had any one follow me to see whether I was acting on the square, I guess the watcher is satisfied by this time," muttered the boy.

Therein he made a mistake. For closely watching its suspects the Russian spy system is undoubtedly the best in the world.

But Ted gave a third address, that of a bazaar in which were many shops and also an up-to-date telephone office.

Arrived here, Ted took out a memorandum book, as if looking for an address.

Then, without hesitation, he stepped into one of the telephone booths.

He rang up central, saying:

"Give me—"

Then he repeated the private telephone number of Count

Kato, known only to a few at the head central office at Tokio.

The syllables of the number had barely left his lips when Ted was struck a stunning blow from behind.

Then he was dragged out of the booth by a young man who looked every inch a Japanese.

But that young man was Kong Tow.

"My friend has been ill all day. I lost sight of him, but now I will take him home," explained Kong, to four or five Japanese who ran up.

Lifting our hero easily, Kong carried him out to the street.

Here he slid the American boy down to his feet, sustaining him with an arm around his waist.

The passing Japanese, never over-curious, paid no heed as Kong raised his hand to summon a solitary carriage, drawn by horses, that stood not far off.

The driver of this carriage was in Kong's own pay.

CHAPTER V.

A CHINAMAN'S WAY OF DOING THINGS.

"You feel better?" asked a low voice, as Ted opened his eyes.

His senses returning slowly, Terrill experienced a decided start when he realized that he was lying on a woven bamboo couch, with his hands tied to the frame of the couch on either side.

His next discovery was that his feet were tied to the foot of the couch.

Then Ted looked up.

A smiling Oriental face looked down into his.

"You have had a misfortune," smiled the Oriental.

"I should say so!" uttered Ted, grimly.

He had not a doubt that he had been outwitted by the Russian's superior spy service.

"If they've got me in here and tied up it's my finish!" throbbed the young American, desperately.

"Maybe you wonder what has happened," hinted the Oriental.

"If you were in my fix wouldn't you wonder?" Ted retorted.

"Maybe, but it is all right."

Again the Oriental smiled gently.

But Ted had been in the Orient long enough to know that these strange people of the East can be gentlest when they mean to set fire to your house.

The Oriental who sat on the edge of the cot looked like a Japanese.

But so, for that matter, had Kong Tow, so looks were plainly nothing to go by.

"Shall I tell you what happened?" questioned this stranger.

"Yes, if you care to."

"You were knocked down in a telephone booth. By the agents of a Russian spy, we think. But you were rescued and brought here. You were telephoning Count Kato, or some one at his office, eh?"

"Who said so?" counter-questioned Ted.

He was too sharp to give all his business away to a stranger.

"At least," went on the brown-faced stranger, "that was what we supposed. That was why we rescued you and brought you here."

"Rescued me?" echoed Ted.

"Even so."

"Then what on earth have you got me tied up for?"

"That was because we found you tied. We have no right to release you until we get the order from Count Kato or one of his officers."

"What the deuce has Count Kato to do with this business?" Ted asked, trying to make his voice sound only inquisitive.

"Don't you know?"

"I don't even know who Count Kato is. Surely, he is not the Russian you spoke of?"

Ted tried to look puzzled, but the other only laughed.

"Very well; keep your secret if you want to," remarked the Oriental.

"But, confound you," roared Ted, "I haven't even got one to keep."

The Oriental flashed a swift look at the boy before he observed:

"If you do not know Count Kato, then I am afraid it will be so much the worse for you. We brought you here instead of taking you to a prison, because we believed—well, because we believed that you knew the count."

"Then I've got to go to prison because I don't happen to have the pleasure of knowing the count? Is that it?"

"Oh, perhaps not."

Again the Oriental laughed.

"See here," demanded Terrill, "how long have I got to lie here, hitched up in this fashion?"

"Until I receive orders what to do with you."

"How long will that take?"

"I don't know."

"It may be for hours, eh?"

"Oh, yes, maybe."

"I see an American newspaper on that table over there. May I have it to look at, to pass the time away?"

The Oriental moved toward the little bamboo table, then hesitated.

"It would do you no good. You could not hold the paper."

"I can, if you'll free one of my hands," hinted Ted.

"That I cannot do."

"Just one hand?" pleaded the boy.

"Against my orders."

"Were your orders to kill me with dullness?" reproached the boy. "All I want is one hand free, so that I can read the paper. My other hand and both my feet will be tied, so that I couldn't make a move to get away without being caught at it."

After a little more coaxing, Ted did succeed in getting his jailer to free one hand, the left.

Then the newspaper was placed in that hand.

But Ted could not, even had he tried, have reached that other tied hand, except with so much effort that his captor would have caught him at it.

Though Ted pretended to read, it was a long while before he did actually look hard at the printed matter.

His mind was busy with trying to figure out just what had happened.

Could it be that he had really been rescued by the police?

Or, as was much more likely, had he fallen under some of Rovsky's infernal spy work?

The more our hero studied the face of his captor, the more he felt it likely that this fellow was really an undersized Chinaman.

Whoever the fellow was, he was well educated, like Kong Tow, and spoke very good English indeed.

"If the Tokio police really got me, why should they take the trouble to tie me up in this fashion?" wondered the boy. "No; I can't believe that I am in the hands of any agent of the police. In that case, they would have taken me to a police station, or a hospital, and I wouldn't now find myself tied up in this way."

But, on the other hand?

"If I am in the hands of Kong, or, what is just as bad, the Russians, then they wouldn't have risked clubbing me in a public place unless they felt sure that they had me all to rights. And, if I'm in Russian hands, it must be very close to day-day with me! Oh, dear, what a puzzle it all is! And I was fool enough to think that I had a genius for secret police work!"

Ted sighed, dolefully, although he was careful not to let his captor, across the room, hear it.

"I've had the conceit all taken out of me to-day, in any case," he muttered.

His captor did not again offer to speak to him, though from time to time he glanced at the young prisoner to make sure that he was still secure.

The rooms had, instead of the usual paper panes of Japan, the glass windows of a more western civilization.

These windows were closed tightly. Moreover, they were heavily curtained.

Yet they did not wholly shut out the daylight.

Ted, looking around while he pretended to read, judged that the time was somewhere at the latter end of the afternoon.

In another room a door opened. Some one stepped in, out there.

Ted's jailer suddenly started to his feet.

Then our hero saw the fellow bow low.

That other step was coming nearer.

In the next instant Ted Terrill gave an inward gasp of dismay.

He knew the worst at last.

The newcomer, to whom the jailer bowed so low, was Kong Tow!

"Ho, ho, my young American," leered that clever Chinaman, "I was not so very far wrong in my suspicions, was I?"

And now I am to have my own way. You can hinder nothing but your own length of life!"

CHAPTER VI.

TED FACES DEFEAT AND—WORSE!

Still laughing, the rascally Chinaman came across the room, halting beside the cot.

He leered down, as he asked:

"You Yankee fool, did you think yourself smart enough to outwit the sleekest spies in the world?"

But Ted was prepared to face it out as best he could.

"Won't you please talk about something I can understand?" begged the American boy.

"You don't understand what I just said?" jeered the crafty Chinaman.

"Not a word!"

"What a poor liar you are!"

"See here," exploded the American boy. "For some reason you've taken it into your head to dislike me. Why? I can't understand it. Now, with Rovsky, it is different."

"Is it?" laughed the yellow man.

Ted's heart gave a sudden, downward beat, then seemed to stop going for a moment.

The Chinaman's voice seemed to hint that Rovsky didn't believe any more in the American than the yellow man did himself.

"Does Rovsky know that you have me here?" demanded Ted.

"Maybe."

"Are you going to give me any show to see him?"

"Maybe."

Kong turned away, as if the conversation were not worth going further with just now.

Kong lighted a cigarette.

He smoked three or four of them before he came back to the side of the cot.

"What a big fool you have been!" remarked the yellow man.

"Why?"

"To think you could fool us. You Yankee simpleton! Do you not realize that there are two hundred Russian spies in Tokio?"

"What if there are?"

"Suppose, Yankee, that you had succeeded in beating us? What good would it have done you? Every one of those two hundred spies would have dropped everything else until he had evened the score by killing you."

"But you haven't hinted yet why any Russian should want to kill me."

Kong laughed, disagreeably.

"Didn't I stand ready to serve the Russians?" demanded Ted.

"How?" leered Kong.

"In any way that I could!"

"Such as going to a telephone and calling for Count Kato by his private telephone number? Ha! You start. Did you suppose that with two hundred of the best spies

in the world here we did not even know the private telephone number of the chief of the secret police of Tokio? Yankee, I tell you, you are too much of a simpleton. You never should have gone into such a game against the Russians! We have men from every nation here in Tokio who serve us!"

"Do you treat them all the way you did me?" flared Ted.

Some one else was coming.

Kong turned away.

In another moment Ivan Rovsky entered the room.

He flashed an amused look at Ted Terrill, then looked at Kong.

"Oh, Rovsky, I am glad you have come," hailed Ted, cheerily.

"Yes, people are often glad to see me," smiled the Russian, moving slowly toward the cot.

He eyed the boy so coolly, so unbelievingly, that our hero realized that his last hope of clearing himself had been taken from him.

But still he determined to persevere with a bluff.

"Do you, too, believe in this crazy Chinaman's ideas?" gasped Ted Terrill.

"Oh, I believed in them at the time," responded the Russian, with a smile so cool and calculating that Ted's blood seemed turning to ice. "Only I did not believe in having trouble started at the Foreigners' Club, when the trouble could just as well happen somewhere else."

"Here, for instance?" glared Ted.

"Why, this is about as good a place as anywhere in Tokio. We are not likely to be pried upon here."

Ted sighed.

"You all seem to be fools," he muttered, bitterly. "None of you seem capable of understanding anything."

"We know about as much as we need to, I think," smiled Rovsky, who seemed incapable of losing his temper, now that he was on the top of the heap. "When we find that one who proposes to help us is provided with Count Kato's private telephone number, we do not feel like asking much more. My young friend, you were altogether too green to go into such a game against veteran spies like us. You do not realize how well equipped we are for watching every one whom we suspect. Really, you must blame Count Kato for not having posted you better!"

"All of you mention Count Kato," Ted complained. "Won't you, now, be good enough to explain who this count is?"

"No," said Rovsky, with a shrug of his shoulders. "The count's name makes us feel nervous. We will not discuss him, nor even mention him any more."

Lighting a cigarette and seating himself on a bamboo stool, the Russian eyed the boy curiously, but in silence, for some moments.

"I suppose," Rovsky remarked, at last, "that you intended to send word to Count—er, to your superior officer—that we had decided not to make any attempt on the naval

plans for several days yet. Eh? Was that the word you meant to send him?"

"What's the use of talking with you?" demanded Ted, bitterly. "You are prepared not to believe a word that I say."

"Oh, well, it really doesn't matter," jeered the Russian, in a voice that sounded almost good-natured. "Kong!"

"Yes," answered the crafty yellow man.

"Did you get the naval plans this afternoon?"

"I have them—here!"

Kong Tow took from his clothing a package of papers. He glanced at them an instant, then passed them over.

"Everything is here, all right?" demanded the Russian.

"Everything, as I expect my reward for this work!"

"So, then!"

Rovsky tucked the papers away in an inner pocket, fastened them in with safety pins, then turned smilingly to the boy.

"So, my Yankee friend, you thought to hinder the Russian government from getting possession of these Japanese naval plans? You thought to outwit the whole Russian spy system here in Tokio. Alas, for you! You're out of luck, as your countrymen phrase it. In three hours or so myself and these papers will be safe aboard the Russian warship Dimitri Goloskoi, in Yokohama Harbor. While you—well, as for you, Kong Tow will tell you about that—will show you, in fact. Good-by! In the next world, if you should meet the shades of any of the secret agents of Russia, give them a wide berth! Again, good-by!"

With a light-hearted laugh, this agent of the Russian government rose and made his way calmly to the door.

He closed it behind him, the sound of his footsteps dying out.

Now Kong Tow turned upon the boy.

The yellow man's face was set, hard, with the lines of cruelty that so easily come into the Chinese face.

"Now, you Yankee fool," hissed the Chinese spy, "we shall show what can be done with you!"

CHAPTER VII.

A STRENUOUS MOMENT.

It is worse than foolish to hope to coax mercy out of a Chinaman when his mind is made up to torture or kill.

That much Ted knew from the length of time that he had lived in the East.

There are hundreds of thousands of Chinese in the Philippines.

One who lives there any length of time grows to know the Chinese almost as well as he could from a long residence in China.

Ted, therefore, felt almost absolute despair when the crafty Kong looked down, loweringly, at him.

"I have been thinking what to do with you," observed the Chinaman. "I have about decided on the slicing. Do you understand what that is?"

Did he?

Ted Terrill's heart almost stopped beating on the instant

The "slicing" is the most inhuman, the most tormenting form of killing that the Chinese mind, noted for its cruelty, has ever been able to devise.

It consists in cutting small strips, or "slices," of the victim's flesh away from his body.

These "slices" are usually very small, but the torment is as great as if the "slices" were larger.

In time, of course, the victim bleeds to death.

Yet one who administers the "slicing" carefully and thoughtfully can make the victim's torment last for hours before death comes mercifully in to end the torture.

"You have seen my knife before," mocked Kong, taking out his weapon and holding it before the boy's eyes. "You shall soon know whether it is sharp. While you are waiting, you may be glad to know that it is near you."

"With the mocking essence of utter cruelty, Kong laid the knife down on the boy's breast.

"We are not much afraid of noise here," went on Kong. "Still, it may be better to gag you, for, when a fellow is being sliced, sometimes his voice grows to be three or four times as strong as usual. I have known it to be so in China!"

With that Kong turned away, going over to a cupboard and ransacking in it.

Probably he was after material for a gag.

The other Chinaman, who had been Ted's captor for hours, had gone into the next room.

But now he came back through the open doorway.

As he did so he uttered a warning yell, then stood on the threshold, as if undecided whether to leap forward or to flee.

It will be remembered that one of Ted Terrill's hands, the left, had been freed in order that he might read.

Just before Kong had first come in Ted had wedged the newspaper down between the cot and the wall.

At the same time he had rested that left hand down by his side.

Hence, neither Kong nor Rovsky had noticed that the captive American had one hand free.

Possibly the other Chinaman, who now stood rooted to the threshold, had forgotten the fact.

But Ted Terrill, with that sharp knife resting on his chest, and one hand free, had speedily released the other.

He had freed one foot, too, just at that instant when Kong's yellow friend discovered what was up.

Ted, when caught at it, was just about to slash the cords lashed around the other ankle.

With a cry of rage, Kong wheeled, rushing over to the cot.

But Ted, knowing how helpless he was when tied at all, coolly, deliberately used that other instant for freeing the imprisoned foot.

Now, with a roar, he leaped to his feet, just in time to shove Kong Tow back.

"Now you won't last a minute—you two yellow heathen!" challenged Ted Terrill.

But Kong was wholly game.

Calling to his friend in Chinese, Kong then closed in, looking for a chance to grapple, even though the boy held the keen knife—even though Ted Terrill's eyes blazed with a wicked light that had never shone there before.

Yet, in all his rage, the boy could not tolerate the idea of fighting with a knife.

That was too un-American!

Tossing the blade behind him he heard it fall back on the cot.

Now, with a grunt, Kong leaped at him

Ted landed out with his fists.

But that was only a feint.

Seeing the other Chinaman closing in also, Ted, as he feinted with his fists, brought up one of his feet, landing with crushing force in Kong's stomach.

Bump! Kong was down—and out!

He lay as helpless as a senseless log of wood.

But the other Chinaman was to be reckoned with now.

In sheer fear he was rushing forward to put up a good fight.

Ted went for him, again feinting with his fists.

At the instant of striking, just as this yellow fellow dodged, Ted ducked low down, grabbed the enemy around the legs, and lifted him over his shoulder.

Just a fleeting instant Ted Terrill held the fellow there, balanced across his right shoulder.

Then—hurl! Ted dashed the fellow, head-first, against the wall.

It was an awful force with which that enemy struck.

He landed on the floor in a senseless heap.

But Ted did not wait to look.

Rushing through into the other room, he made for the door.

It was locked, but Ted Terrill was full of the strength of desperation.

Hurling his shoulders against the door, he cracked it.

A second, savage, determined assault broke the door so that he could pull it open.

He was in a corridor, at the head of a flight of stairs an instant later.

Down the stairs he hastened, to the open street door.

Then out in the street he landed.

One glimpse around him told him that he was in a Chinese quarter of Tokio.

He soon came to a corner, from which he knew his way.

He was once more in a Japanese part of the city.

"Rovsky boasted that he was on the way to Yokohama. Then he must go to the railway station. I'll overhaul him there," determined the boy. "Get away with those naval plans he shall not!"

Ted hurried briskly along on foot for the very good reason that there was no jinrikisha in sight.

As soon as he came across one of those queer, but handy little street wagons of Japan, he meant to spring into it and order the coolie to make the best possible speed to the railway station.

For the present, he turned the first corners that he came

to on the most direct way to the main railway station of Tokio.

And suddenly, while so hurrying along, he received the greatest kind of a shock.

As he passed one corner and looked down a side street his glance fell upon Ivan Rovsky.

Ted was so surprised, for a few seconds, that he had to look again.

"Thunder, yes, that's Ivan Rovsky, the Russian spy!" he throbbed. "But the fellow is not headed toward the railway station. What does it mean? What's up? Well, there's just one way to settle that. I'll follow him and turn him over to the first Japanese policeman that we may meet!"

CHAPTER VIII.

"SIGNED YOUR OWN DEATH WARRANT!"

It was yet some time before dark.

Never before in his life had Ted Terrill done a real, serious job of shadowing.

Now he must do it, and do it well.

Worst of all, in these quiet cross streets there were few people astir.

They were all Japanese, however, and, from his glimpses of them, Ted feared that none of them understood English.

"I can't fumble, by calling upon any old passer-by to help me," gritted the boy. "I've fumbled enough already. Now I'll feel eternally disgraced if Rovsky gets away from me—with those naval plans! Oh, dear, when you really want a policeman it's as hard to find one here as it is in the United States."

The real reason for the scarcity of policemen now did not at once occur to young Terrill.

The Japanese are such a law-loving people, with so much respect for order, that their policemen have usually an easy time, except when foreigners start trouble.

This was one of the quietest and most orderly sections of Tokio—one of the least likely places in which to find one of the little but agile brown policemen.

Ahead, down the street, came another white man, dressed in European costume.

Ted scanned him eagerly.

"By some strange chance he might turn out to be some one who would help me handle Rovsky!" flashed through the boy's mind. "But, no! I can't chance it. I can't take any risk of a fluke that would give the Russian a chance to slip away from me. A-ah!"

For this white stranger, coming toward them both, had collided lightly with the Russian.

"I beg ten thousand pardons!" Ted heard the stranger protest, as our hero dodged in under cover of a convenient doorway.

"Do not feel uncomfortable about it, sir," Ted heard Rovsky reply, with an easy laugh.

"But I was so clumsy to run into you."

"It was an accident."

"Thank you for saying so."

"Do not think of it again, I beg you," went on Rovsky.

"Then you excuse me?"

"Readily."

"Thank you, and good-afternoon."

"Au revoir, my friend."

The stranger came on, hurrying past the doorway that sheltered our hero. —

He did not look in that way and so did not see our hero. In just an instant Ted Terrill was on the trail again.

Around another corner they went, into a pretty Japanese street.

And now Ted Terrill fairly throbbed with joy.

"Oh, glory!" he thrilled. "It's all right now!"

Ahead, down this street, sauntering toward the Russian and the American, were three little Japanese policemen in their natty uniforms.

They were laughing and chatting, these three policemen, as if off duty.

Now Ted did not hesitate to close up the gap between Rovsky and himself.

What did it matter if the wily Russian did discover the American boy in his tracks?

These policemen could attend to the rest.

Ted knew that well enough.

The Japanese policemen are among the best athletes of the world.

At running, fighting, grappling, they are quick and ready.

Rovsky, hearing the rapid steps behind him, did turn just as the Japanese policemen and a few citizens of the Empire neared the scene.

Swift as a flash the Russian turned, saw Ted, and understood.

"If any of you policemen speak English, listen!" shouted Terrill, swiftly. "That man is a Russian spy! He has the plans of your naval office in his pocket, taking them to Yokohama. Seize him! I will prove what I say!"

For a moment the three policemen stood still, looking in wonder at the American boy.

Rovsky, himself, plainly did not know what to do.

"You'll find the naval plans in his inner coat pocket!" cried Ted.

Flop! Rovsky was on his back in a jiffy, and the papers secured.

"You accursed Yankee meddler!" shrieked the Russian. "You have signed your own death warrant!"

"Oh, you be hanged!" glowed Ted. "I've fulfilled my task and have prevented you from getting away with the goods! I don't care a hang about your threats, so keep them to yourself."

The Japanese policemen do not carry handcuffs, but, instead, a long cord with which they are wonderfully expert at tying prisoners.

While two of the policemen now busied themselves with tying this raging prisoner, the third brought the packet of papers slowly toward Ted.

"How did you know about this, please?" asked the policeman, polite, even in his excitement.

"I entered the secret service under Count Kato this morning," Ted whispered. "You'll find that it's all right. I'll go with you to the police station, and from there you can report to his excellency, the count."

The policeman appeared satisfied, Ted's manner was both so composed and so positive.

Curiously, the Japanese unwrapped the packet, glancing at the sheets inside.

"Why," he murmured, "there's nothing written on these pages!"

"Nothing written there?" gasped Ted.

It was a facer!

But the little policeman patiently held the sheets out before our hero's eyes.

Truly enough, no writing appeared on those pages.

"Have I been fooled again?" Ted demanded, disgustedly, of himself. "Then why was Rovsky so angry?"

Suddenly a thought flashed into his mind.

"Don't let those sheets get away from you," urged Terrill. "They may prove to be written in sympathetic ink—a kind of ink that fades almost as soon as the writing is put on. One of your Japanese chemists may find a way to bring that writing out on the pages, just as a Russian chemist would if he had the chance."

"I see," nodded the little brown policeman.

Yet, plainly, he was disappointed.

"Hold on!" vibrated Ted Terrill, tensely. "A little way back there another white man jostled into Rovsky. Wouldn't that have given a chance to slip the real papers into the hands or pocket of a confederate?"

"Surely! It may be!" assented the policeman.

"And—blazes! Isn't that way"—pointing—"the way to the Shimbashi railway station?"

"Assuredly," replied the Japanese officer.

The Shimbashi is the first railway station out past the main Tokio station on the line to Yokohama.

Shimbashi is a suburb of the Japanese capital.

Ted's eyes began to blaze with the determination of the chase.

"See here, my friend," he whispered, as the other two policemen helped the hand-tied Russian to his feet, "wouldn't it be worth our while—yours and mine—to grab the first jinrikisha and make fast time to the Shimbashi station?"

"It might be," nodded the little policeman, patiently, and not without interest.

"Will you do it? Will you go with me?" begged Ted, excitedly. "For, of course, I couldn't make an arrest lawfully, while you could. But I could pick that stranger out of a crowd of ten thousand men."

"Wait, and then I will go with you," answered the little officer.

He called one of his fellow-policemen to him and they spoke in whispers, in Japanese.

"Come," nodded the policeman who had the blank sheets, "we will go. I will turn these seemingly worthless sheets

over to my comrade, who will see that they go to the police station with the prisoner. Come!"

"A pleasant journey through life for you, Ted Terrill!" called Rovsky, quiveringly. "Wherever you go you will be dogged until your life pays for this day's work!"

But Ted was too full of the excitement of the man-hunt to pay any heed to the Russian spy.

In another instant Ted had all he could do to keep his mind on his legs.

For that little Japanese policeman, trained athlete that he was, was setting a pace in sprinting that called for the best running powers of the longer-legged American.

Ere they had gone much more than an eighth of a mile, however, they came upon an empty jinrikisha.

The policeman spoke to the coolie rapidly in Japanese.

Then our hero and his new friend piled into the odd little vehicle.

It was an affair made to carry one passenger, but now, with squeezing, it was made to accommodate two.

The distance to the Shimbashi station was something more than two miles, but this coolie, traveling always at a trot, had them at their destination in less than twenty minutes.

Arriving at the station, Ted and the little policeman raced in together.

But they found, in a twinkling, that a train had left for Yokohama some two minutes before.

"Come over here to this man," commanded the policeman, taking Ted by the arm and leading him to a rather tall Japanese in ordinary European attire.

"Describe the man we are looking for," ordered the policeman.

Ted complied.

"It is too bad," cried the tall Japanese, impatiently. "The man you describe went on that train to Yokohama."

"But you can telegraph and have him arrested, can't you?" Ted appealed to the little policeman.

"He can," replied the policeman, nodding toward the tall Japanese.

"Who is he?"

"An inspector."

"A police official?"

"Yes. It is his duty to know who arrives and goes away by the trains."

"Then, in heaven's name, ask him to telegraph quick."

"I will do so," nodded the tall one. "But we need not hurry now. It is twenty minutes before there is another train for Yokohama. And it will be more than an hour before the other train reaches Yokohama. Come, now, give me a good description, again, of that stranger."

The inspector jotted down notes of Ted's very full description.

Then the inspector went away.

He was gone some ten minutes, but at last returned.

"It is all right," nodded the inspector to the policeman. "I have heard from headquarters. This American is, as he says, an agent in the service of Count Kato."

"Now, listen: You, Policeman Kimawara, will go with this American to Yokohama. If he points out any man and orders you to arrest him, you will do so. You will help this American in every way that you can."

Then, turning to our hero, the inspector went on:

"I have telegraphed to Yokohama, and you and Kimawara are to go on the next train. There you will see if the police get the right man. And, if not, you will search Yokohama for him."

"I'll go to the dock nearest to the Russian warship, Dimitri Goloskoi, first of all," Ted retorted.

"Yes, that would be best," admitted the inspector. "At Yokohama you will find that there will be plenty policemen on hand to help you."

Then the inspector went away.

During the next ten minutes that they waited for the train, Kimawara folded his arms and stood in one position, as motionless and expressionless as a cigar-store Indian.

Ted, who could not keep from pacing up and down the platform, envied the little Japanese for his calmness.

"But it isn't his funeral if the Russians all get away," muttered Ted. "If I don't stop those naval plans from falling into the wrong hands I shall feel like the prize fool of the whole United States!"

The train came at last. Ted and his companion entered one of the second-class cars.

They traveled free, on the business of his majesty, the Mikado, as the inspector took pains to explain to the Japanese conductor.

Then began the long ride. It is some eighteen miles between Tokio and Yokohama, but the fastest train takes more than an hour to make the trip.

There are some dozen stations on the way, and the train stops at them all.

But, of course, Yokohama, which is the seaport city of Tokio, was reached at last.

As Ted and Kimawara stepped from the train a Japanese in European dress stepped toward them under the railway station lights, for it was now dark.

"Are you Count Kato's American Agent?" whispered this stranger.

"Yes. Have you arrested the man we telegraphed you about?"

"We have arrested three of them," replied the Yokohama inspector.

"Three?" chuckled Ted. "You've been doing a big business, then. Let me see the prisoners!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE DARK DEED ON YOKOHAMA BAY.

"Come, then!"

This Yokohama inspector led the way to a room at the far end of the railway station.

Outside the door a policeman stood on guard.

Inside the room were two more little brown policemen, with the three prisoners.

Ted took a quick look over them all.

"You've got three men," he sighed, disappointedly, "but not one of them is the right one."

The police inspector looked much concerned.

"There were but seven Europeans on the train," he replied. "Three of the others were women, and one a child."

"Then our man got off at some station further up the line," suggested Kimawara.

"Of course," Ted replied. "And now, if he intends to make Yokohama to-night, he is coming in by jinrikisha."

"I have orders to give you as many policemen as you want," observed the inspector.

"We must get over, at once, to the dock nearest to the Russian warship," Ted declared. "And I suppose you will release these prisoners."

"At once if you so direct it," replied the inspector, with a bow.

"Why, of course," retorted Ted. "May I speak to them?"

"Certainly."

All three of the prisoners appeared to be either English or Americans.

They had been eyeing our hero in no particularly pleasant way, as if they blamed him for their temporary trouble.

"It was too bad that you were given all this trouble," smiled Ted, going over to them. "But the police were after a man, a white man, and they couldn't take any chance of letting him get away."

"Oh, the police were polite enough, and we haven't had a rough time," laughed one of the prisoners. "But who's really wanted, and what for?"

Ted shook his head, smiling.

"And how happen the Japanese police to be taking orders from you?" questioned another of the trio.

"They don't," Terrill explained, glibly. "But I happen to know the man they're after. You're not under arrest any longer. Good-night, gentlemen!"

Ted hustled outside.

Here Kimawara and four other policemen awaited him, as well as six jinrikishas.

"Tell them to take us to the dock nearest to the Russian ship," our hero requested, and Kimawara gave the order in Japanese.

It was barely a five minutes' ride to the dock.

At Yokohama none of the ships tie up at a dock, but anchor in the bay.

After dark a police regulation requires that a boat from any ship may land only at the nearest dock.

Hence the watching the Russian ship promised to be an easy affair.

Swift time was made over to the dock.

Arriving there, however, the police party found no one on the dock, nor any small boat alongside.

Out in the bay, a quarter of a mile from shore, the cruiser Dimitri Goloskoi twinkled where that ship rode at anchor.

It was the first Russian naval vessel that had visited Japanese waters since the ending of the war.

It is doubtful if it would have been there now had it not been on peculiar business.

Out on the cruiser all was quiet, though, as the big craft swung around, her lights shone on a small boat tied to a swinging boom.

"We want to hide here if we can," whispered Ted, to Kimawara. "If that boat is coming ashore to-night we want to be here to see on what business."

It was an easy matter to hide in a building half way down to the dock.

In the fraction of a minute Ted and his five little policemen—"toy cops" an American boy might call them until he knew better—were hidden inside the building.

Then followed a long wait.

As the time dragged by our hero began to feel that it was being wasted.

"Another fool's errand," he muttered, disgustedly.

Terrill had his eye most of the time at a slit that had been cut in the paper blind over a window in that darkened room.

From his post the boy could watch the "bund," or waterfront street.

No one could step upon the dock from the bund without being seen by Ted.

At the other end of the little structure stood Kimawara, as much like a cigar-store Indian as he had been once before that night.

It was Kimawara's task to watch the Dimitri Goloskoi and her small boat alongside.

An hour must have passed when one of the little policemen laid a hand on Ted's arm.

"Kimawara, he say that boat come in from Russki warship," whispered the policeman in the boy's ear.

"I wish I could see somebody at this end, coming to meet it," muttered Ted.

"The boatmen are resting on oars, little way from dock," reported the same Yokohama policeman, five minutes later.

"Nothing doing at this end," grunted Ted, disgustedly.

Two minutes later he changed his tune.

Some one was approaching the dock.

His eyes now well used to the dark, Terrill watched his heart thumping under his ribs.

Ah, yes! Here came the man.

Ted stared at him hard, gulping down.

"That's my man," he declared, suddenly.

But he did not speak aloud.

He took another good look as the man came closer.

Beyond any question, it was the same man who had jostled Rovsky on that side street in Tokio.

"Now I've got you!" thrilled Ted Terrill.

He stepped softly over to the door, listening until the sound of footsteps showed that the fellow had gone by.

Then Ted Terrill whispered swiftly in the ear of patient Kimawara, who nodded.

By the time that the stranger, who merely sauntered, was thirty feet past the little building, its door opened.

Ted Terrill stepped softly out.

Turning, he followed, very softly, in the tracks of the stranger.

That individual was slowly puffing at an almost fresh cigar.

Halting and turning, near the end of the dock, he came face to face with the American boy.

For just an instant the stranger started.

Then the sight of a white man's face seemed to reassure him.

"Good-evening," spoke Ted, politely.

"Ah, good-evening," came the cheery greeting from the other.

"Taking the air on the dock?" smiled Ted, pleasantly.

But our hero's glance, covertly, was on the boat from the Russian warship.

That little craft had started to come in toward the dock.

Now it had stopped again, the rowers resting on their oars.

The man whom Ted had accosted did not reply, so our hero again asked, carelessly:

"Taking the evening air here?"

"No. I—I—"

"Oh, I didn't mean to intrude on your business," Ted made haste to assure him. "Pardon me."

"There can be nothing to pardon," smiled the stranger.

Then, again, he started—ever so slightly.

But watchful Ted Terrill noted it.

The cause of that start must have been the sudden sight of a little Japanese policeman who came strolling down the dock.

Soon after there came another.

The stranger with the new cigar began to look a bit uneasy.

"Great little fellows, these policemen, aren't they?" inquired Ted, carelessly.

"A very fine body of men, I believe," replied the stranger, but he spoke rather hurriedly.

There was a slight quiver in his voice.

"They are very intelligent and clever," Ted went on, smoothly. "I hear that they seldom miss or lose their man, when they go after one."

"So I hear," agreed the stranger.

Then, once more, he looked annoyed.

For now a third policeman was in sight, strolling toward them.

As if he did not care for such company, the stranger turned, walking down to the end of the dock.

Ted went slowly after him.

"Here comes still another policeman," smiled our hero, looking straight and hard into the stranger's eyes.

"What can bring so many at this one spot?" queried the stranger, in a still more uneasy voice.

"I haven't the ghost of an idea," smiled Ted. "Have you?"

The stranger started, dropping his cigar over the edge of the dock into the water.

"I? Any idea? Why should I have?" demanded the stranger.

His knees seemed to be shaking slightly under him now.

If this man was guilty of any wrongdoing that made him fear the police, then Terrill was playing with him in cat-and-mouse fashion.

"I wonder what that boat is coming in for?" suddenly propounded our hero, glancing over the water, just before the fifth policeman appeared on the dock.

"How should I know?" cried the stranger, irritably.

"Then it's not coming after you, eh?"

The stranger's face was beginning to grow somewhat ghastly.

"You're asking a great many questions," grumbled the man.

Kimawara came slowly up to them.

He eyed the stranger, who tried to meet the scrutiny bravely.

Then the little policeman inquired:

"You going out to the Russian ship?"

It is not wise to beat about the bush with a policeman, so the stranger, evidently trying to steady his voice, replied:

"Yes."

"To-night?"

"Certainly."

"Now?"

"Yes."

Kimawara turned to glance inquiringly at our hero.

The stranger, too, followed that glance.

His knees were going sadly under him now.

The boat, rowed by eight men, and with a young Russian officer at the stern, was almost in now.

Once more Kimawara turned to our hero, asking quietly:

"What do you say? Does this man go to the Russian ship?"

"What are you asking this boy for?" cried the stranger, angrily.

But Kimawara insisted:

"Does he go, sir? Shall he go?"

"I think he'd better go with you, first," Ted replied, coolly.

Now the stranger, though shaking, turned like a wild animal at bay.

"What does this mean?" he demanded, loudly.

"If it means anything at all," spoke Ted, coolly, though his heart was pounding, "it means that you might as well go quietly with these policemen. A fuss won't hurt any one but yourself."

With a gasp and a quiver, the stranger wheeled around, trying to leap from the dock down into the waters of the bay.

But Kimawara, swift as a wildcat, caught him by the shoulders and drew him back.

Flop! The stranger was on his back now, so quickly that he never knew how he got there.

"Stop this outrage!" he yelled, kicking lustily.

But, while four policemen held him helpless, Kimawara quietly went through the fellow's pockets.

He brought some papers to light, scanned them by the aid of a match.

"We have the real papers this time," announced Kimawara, coolly. "Take this man along."

With the quickness with which they do their work, these little brown policemen bound their prisoner and dragged him to his feet, marching him off the dock.

"Where is the American?" cried Kimawara, suddenly, realizing that our hero was not on the dock.

"He must have run ahead," replied one of the other policemen.

So they trudged away, unsuspecting.

Ted Terrill, while standing at the end of the dock, looking on at the search, had been struck by a sailor who had climbed stealthily up the steps behind him.

Ted's slight splash, as he landed in the water, was not heard by the eager little Japanese policemen.

As Ted came to the surface, beside the Russian boat, a muscular hand gripped his throat in a tight clutch, shutting off his breath.

Several ugly faces glared down at him.

Ted was a prisoner in the hands of the Russians!

CHAPTER X.

A RUSSIAN PRISONER.

That fearful grip at the throat soon strangled Ted Terrill into unconsciousness.

As long as his brain remained awake he struggled.

But other hands reached over the gunwale of the boat and drew him aboard.

He was "out" now; all memory a blank.

Down into the bottom of the boat he was dropped and covered with a tarpaulin.

Slowly, leisurely, the Russian boat started on its return to the warship.

No hail from the police did the officer in charge of this boat fear.

He was an officer of a warship of a so-called "friendly power."

The small boat of a warship, with an officer in charge, is no more subject to police control than would be the warship itself.

But Kimawara and his companions never thought to look for Ted Terrill in that direction.

They supposed, naturally, that our hero had run ahead to the street.

Even when they did not see him there, the Japanese policemen thought but little about it.

Count Kato's agent was not accountable to them. He could do as he pleased.

At the moment when Ted's prisoner, securely bound, was being lifted into a jinrikisha, Ted Terrill himself, another prisoner, was being carried up over the side of the Russian cruiser.

From one of the cabins there stepped out the captain and

a tall, elderly Russian in a black frock suit and high silk hat.

The officer who had been in charge of the small boat whispered a few excited words to the captain and the other man.

Right after that, Ted, who was beginning to revive, was carried below by two marines.

Ted came to in a small, stuffy room that was dark. He lay upon the floor.

There was no furniture in the room—nothing that he could find except a floor and walls, a ceiling that he could dimly see, and a heavy, iron-barred door.

Just outside, in a very dim light, some one was pacing.

As Ted came more to his senses he concluded that this must be a sentry, a guard.

He crept to the door, looking out.

Yes, the man was in uniform and carried a rifle at his shoulder.

To say that Ted was fearfully down at the mouth would be putting it mildly.

He was all but paralyzed with fright.

Often had he read of the fate that befalls those who get in the way of Russia's political agents.

Now he was to experience it all for himself.

"Good-by, now, unless the Japs get wise, and come out here to make a search!" throbbed the boy. "They can't do that, either. The police have no right, under the laws of nations, to search the warship of another power."

His lips came together grimly.

"What hope is there for me?" he asked himself.

And then answered himself, despairingly:

"None! None, in the world!"

Then came still another thought, one that caused him nearly to break out into wild, hysterical laughter:

"My only hope lies in the Russian sense of mercy!"

Russian mercy! What a hollow mockery that would be!

"Ted, old fellow, just pull yourself together and prepare for the worst! Prepare, for as sure as there is a sky above us, you'll get it—the whole limit and hard!"

There is a courage that is bold in the daylight, and that yet falters in the dark.

The great Napoleon has declared that "the rarest kind of courage is the two o'clock in the morning courage."

There, in the dark, in the silence, save for some light throbings of distant machinery and the tread of that one sentry, Ted fell a prey to the worst fears.

He found himself shaking with fright.

Then he pulled himself together.

"You've got to keep your nerve, old fellow," he told himself, angrily. "You're not the first American that has had to face death—or worse. Most of them died like men, or faced whatever they had to face with set teeth and steady knees. You can't let yourself get worse than other Americans!"

After that he fell to watching every sign of fear, trying to crush it out.

He practiced smiling there in the dark, and felt that he was getting on better.

But, after an hour, the awful loneliness began to prey upon him.

"If I had even a dog to talk to," he thought.

Then his thoughts traveled back to Rovsky and that other Russian spy whom he had helped to "jug."

"They're not going through anything like this," he muttered. "They're having it easy, except for being prisoners. I can guess the way they're being handled. Polite police officials have assured them of regret at being obliged to detain them. They've been fed if they're hungry; served with tea, if they're thirsty. They have had their cigarettes supplied them, and have been asked if anything else could be done for their comfort. That's the Japanese politeness. If a Japanese has to kill you, even, he'll do it politely. Ted, my boy, you got the worst of this deal!"

But talking to himself threatened to make for madness. He longed for some other human being to talk to.

How would the sentry do?

He would try him.

"Sentry, can't I have a drink of water?" Ted asked, softly.

Tramp! tramp! went the man's feet; there was no other answer.

"Sentry!" called the boy, sharply.

Shifting his rifle to carry-arms, the sentry came to the door of the little cell.

"Can't you get me a drink of water, or have somebody get it for me?" appealed the boy.

The marine looked stupidly at him.

Ted, standing with his face to the bars, could just make out that face.

"Can't you get me a drink of water?" repeated the boy. The sentry answered him in guttural Russian.

"Oh, he can't understand English, of course," throbbed the boy, disappointedly.

Ted had heard that many Russians spoke French fluently. Our hero had had a few months of drill in the French language at school.

Now he tried French, haltingly, upon this sentry.

But again the fellow shook his head, answering in that same harsh Russian jargon.

"Oh, dear, no! Only the educated Russians speak French," groaned the boy. "This poor fellow isn't educated; probably can't read and write in his own language."

It has been stated that not three in a hundred of the Russian soldiers know how to read and write.

Tramp! tramp! The sentry had resumed his pacing.

"Nothing doing there," sighed Ted, disconsolately. "I wonder how late in the night it is."

He had his watch, and it was ticking noisily in that silent place, but it was too dark, even at the grated door, to make out the position of the tiny hands over the dial.

"I wonder if I could sleep," throbbed Ted. "That would kill a heap of time and cure a lot of loneliness."

There was nothing to lie on, save the hard floor, which appeared to be built of some kind of cement.

But Ted lay down, shifting every time the floor seemed especially hard under him.

At last he began to sleep fitfully. Then, after a while, he slept more deeply.

Yet, at best, it was a hard and painful sleep.

After some hours our hero woke up for good, but so stiff and so pain-racked in his bones that at first he could hardly stir.

"This won't do," grumbled the boy. "I've got to exercise out of this."

Taking off his jacket, tossing it to the floor, he started in on some of the light gymnastics that he had been taught to do in the public school back in the United States.

Soon the sentry heard something going on in that cell.

Ted saw him standing at the door, peeping in, a look of bewilderment on his stupid face.

Then there was a low hail outside.

Soon another marine, a corporal, came with a lantern.

Together the two marines stood peering in between the iron bars at this strange American youth.

"There's no need to stop for you fellows," grunted Ted.

So he went on with his strange movements, working out the stiffness and soreness in different parts of his body.

But these marines only stared the harder.

Plainly, it was too much for them.

"They think I'm crazy," chuckled Ted, and purposely threw more life into his gymnastic movements.

Then, afraid that he would laugh in their faces, he turned his back upon the two puzzled marines.

Now he was doing something that made them fairly gasp.

With his hands over his head, bending back as far as he could, he next swept his hands forward and down, until he touched the floor.

This he repeated, over and over again.

He could hear the corporal and the sentry talking in low tones.

But at last Ted was through.

"I think I ought to be oiled up now; the soreness seems to be most gone," he murmured.

Then he walked over to the barred door, smiling at the two puzzled soldiers.

But the corporal swiftly drew back, then tramped off down the dimly lit corridor.

Tramp! tramp! The sentry was on his beat again.

Another hour must have passed.

Then a corporal, two marines and one of the cruiser's servants appeared at the door.

The corporal unlocked the door; the servant came in, with two metal pots and a lantern.

"Why, it must be morning, then," Ted discovered. "Surely, this is breakfast."

He squatted on the floor, while the servant uncovered one of the pots and passed it to our hero, and an iron spoon with it.

It was some kind of stew, ill-smelling and greasy, with a wedge of unbuttered, coarse bread thrust in at the top.

It was the toughest kind of a breakfast that Ted Terrill had ever eaten—but he was hungry.

He ate all he could "stomach" of the queer stuff, washing it down with a villainous imitation of coffee from the other pot.

All the while the servant squatted on the floor beside the boy, watching him as he would stare at a freak.

"There, I've feasted like a prince, thank you," cried Ted, amiably, at last, handing back what was left of the meal. "But don't go. I rather like company down here."

With a grin, the servant gathered up the dishes and the lantern.

Once more the corporal unlocked the cell door and let the servant out. Then the bolts were shot again.

"If it's breakfast-time, it must be daylight, too," sighed the boy. "Oh, dear! I never realized how good the sunlight was before!"

Another hour dragged by before there came again the tramp of a corporal's squad.

They opened the cell door, motioning to the boy to come out.

Putting on his jacket, Ted followed them, though not eagerly.

"This is where I learn what happens to me," he muttered.

They conducted him down the narrow corridor, by several doors and through other passageways.

Then, at last, one of the marines halted at the head of an iron ladder.

After first glancing down with his lantern, the marine started below. The corporal signed to our hero to follow.

Down there it all seemed grimy with coal dust and ill-smelling from rancid oil.

Ted's nose and other organs of sense told him that he was now somewhere in the engineer's department of the cruiser.

At last, after leading him some distance from the foot of the ladder, the corporal halted him, opened a solid iron door and signed to the boy to pass on.

Ted crept in through the doorway.

Bang! He was shut up there in absolute darkness.

He heard a chain and a padlock rattle outside, while some of the marines laughed.

Then he heard their departing feet.

"What's the game now?" choked Terrill. "Do they figure on smothering me to death here? Whee! It's a bully place for it!"

In here he could just about stand up, the metal ceiling being within easy reach of his hands overhead.

It was absolutely dark, and all but airless in here. Ted wondered if he could breathe the air in here and live.

"If they wanted to do that what on earth did they take the trouble to feed me for?" he grumbled, in dire dismay.

It seemed as if ages had passed, when the sound of feet was heard again outside.

Then once more the chain and padlock rattled.

The corporal stood just past the opening doorway, beckoning to our hero to come out.

"It must be that they're breaking me in by degrees," thought the boy, desperately. "If the next place is worse than this, they'll finish me up with the next trick."

To his great surprise he was taken back to the same old cell.

Now this place seemed almost heaven as compared with that stuffy cubby-hole down among the coal bunkers.

Even here the air was vile, with the stuffiness and foulness that is always smelled between decks on a cruiser or a warship hailing from Russia.

But it was so sweet by comparison, this air, that Ted caught himself drawing in great gulps of it.

"Blazes!" he muttered, suddenly, a new thought flashing on him. "I wonder if they took me down there because the Japanese had sent out to inquire after my fate? Did they take me down there and then make the bluff of offering to let the Japanese search the vessel?"

Ted was trembling with the thought of how near he might have been to freedom.

The more he thought of it, the more certain he felt that a visit from the Japanese authorities had been the real reason for his being taken further below.

"Then, since I'm up here again, it's a cinch that the little Japs have gone ashore, giving up the idea that they could find me here!"

Ted could not help sinking down to the floor in a heap.

He felt like sobbing, but he choked the tears and the cries back.

Suddenly he sat upright again, listening.

"What new move is up now?" he quivered. "What's the meaning of all that rumbling? Is that the sound of machinery?"

For some time he listened. Surely it was the motion of machinery, for now the vibration shook the big craft.

"I wish, oh, how I wish I was out where I could see just a little of something!" thought the boy, almost despairingly.

Suddenly he leaped to his feet, leaning, wide-mouthed and panting against the cold, damp wall.

"Thunder and guns!" he broke forth, screaming aloud in his amazement and fright. "We're under way. This ship is moving—moving out of Japanese waters!"

Just then a frisky wave under the cruiser's bows made her lurch and heel over slightly.

Now Ted Terrill knew the full truth.

The Dimitri Goloskoi, with the young American prisoner aboard, was heading straight out for the high seas!

CHAPTER XI.

THE AWFUL CHOICE.

For a few minutes Ted remained leaning against the wall of his ship's cell.

He was almost too dazed to think.

He even caught himself, at last, trying to think harder.

Tramp! tramp! That infernally placid sentry outside,

paying no heed to the boy's startled cry, was still pacing monotonously back and forth just outside the door.

"Well, it's sure trouble, with a vengeance now!" throbbed heart-sick Ted Terrill.

As the fuller realization of all this sailing meant dawnd upon him, the crushed boy sank back upon the floor of the cell.

But he did not sob.

His manhood fought hard against that.

To dull that hard, gnawing ache at his heart, Ted even strove to sleep again.

But sleep would not come now.

He found himself wondering how soon this torment of suspense would drive him out of his mind.

Though Terrill could not even remotely guess the time, more than two hours passed after the cruiser had got under way, when a corporal's squad once more approached the door.

This time a young officer was with them.

He entered the cell, a corporal following with a lantern.

"Comfortable, my friend?" asked the young lieutenant, eyeing the boy, who had started to his feet.

"Comfortable?" uttered Ted, scornfully. "Oh, yes, of course!"

"It is to be regretted that we have had to leave you so much to yourself," smiled the young officer. "But circumstances compelled that course."

"Oh, yes, I suppose so," Ted assented, bitterly.

"From now on, we shall endeavor to be more entertaining with you," laughed the lieutenant.

That laugh sent a quivering jar through Ted Terrill's nerves.

"How would you like a last look at Japan?" continued the lieutenant.

"Are you in earnest?" cried Ted, wonderingly.

"Certainly. We are leaving Japan."

"You know what I mean, don't you?"

"Well, what do you mean?" queried the lieutenant.

"Are you in earnest in offering to take me where I can look out upon the world again?"

"Has it been as lonesome as that down here?" cried the lieutenant, in mock compassion.

"Are you going to take me out of here?"

"If you wish to go."

"If I wish to go!" quivered Ted, ironically.

"Then you do wish to leave this comfortable apartment?"

"If you have come down here to mock me" breathed Ted, almost fiercely, "then you have very little manhood in your carcass!"

"Softly, softly, my young friend!" uttered the lieutenant, warningly. "But, perhaps, after all, it does not so much matter what you say. My men do not speak English, and so what you choose to say will not be bad for discipline."

"Are you going to take me out of here?" insisted Terrill.

"As I said before, my Yankee friend, if you wish to go."

"Then you can't be too quick about it."

"Come!"

Ted followed the lieutenant eagerly out of the cell. Then a sudden shock came to him that made him draw back for an instant.

What if this were only a change to a worse torment? "I'll face it out and see the thing through, anyway," quavered the boy.

He followed boldly after that.

To his surprise they went up a flight of steel steps, instead of downward.

Then, of a sudden, the lieutenant threw a steel door open, next turned back, thrusting his arm under the boy's.

"Welcome to the world again!" cried the Russian lieutenant, laughingly.

They stepped out upon the deck, a rush of sweet, pure, strong sea air smiting Ted Terrill in the face.

How he drank it in! It seemed like living again!

"Oh, but this is good!" he admitted, ungrudgingly.

"I am glad you enjoy it," murmured the young officer, but there was a strong tinge of mockery in his voice.

"This can't last long," throbbed anxious Ted. "But I'll make the most of it while it does."

Turning to scan the lieutenant's face, he inquired:

"May I walk about on the deck?"

"I will go with you where you wish," came the mockingly polite reply. "Then you will not be interfered with."

Ted and the lieutenant moved with locked arms, as if they were the greatest friends in the world.

Yet every one of the seamen and marines on deck must have realized Ted's exact status there, for, as the men saluted the lieutenant in passing, they grinned covertly at the young prisoner.

Ted chose to go directly astern nor did the lieutenant object.

The last look at Japan!

The coast-line was below the horizon already.

They must have been thirty to forty miles out from port, for all of Japan that was now visible was Fujiyama, the sacred, snow-capped mountain of the Japanese.

"It was a short week there," smiled Ted, trying to keep up his grit.

"Why do you say a week?" queried the lieutenant.

"Because I was in Japan only about a week."

"My brother was there much longer," said the lieutenant, quietly. "I wonder if he is comfortable there now?"

"Your brother?"

"I am Stefan Rovsky."

Ted started back, gasping, he was so utterly taken by surprise.

"And your brother was——"

"Ivan Rovsky. Of the Russian secret service."

The lieutenant spoke calmly, almost indifferently, but as the two looked steadily into each other's eyes, Ted Terrill realized what an enemy he had in this young, tall, broad-shouldered, fair-haired Russian lieutenant.

"Of course you did not know that he was my brother,"

went on the officer, quietly, and there was a world of sneer in his tone.

"Of course not," Ted assented, dumbly.

"Nor would it have made any difference if you had," resumed Lieutenant Rovsky. "You secret service men play a desperate game. You are always at each other's throats, and of necessity. One must win; one must lose. Poor Ivan lost, at last. But he was a brave and a useful man while he lasted."

Ted was silent.

"You are very young," went on the lieutenant, questioningly. "If it were not that you beat my experienced brother so readily I should suspect that this was your first case."

Ted remained silent, gazing out over the rough, white-capped waves.

"Was it your first case?" persisted Lieutenant Rovsky.

"My first case of what?" Ted retorted.

"You are playing with me now," rejoined the young officer, gripping hard with one hand at his sword-hilt. "Yet why should you try to be so secretive now? My brother is finished, thanks to you. He will go to a Japanese prison for a long term of years. And you are finished in turn. You are aboard a Russian warship, where no other government can interfere, or even learn what became of you. So why should you even seem to deny, any longer, that you were in the pay of that clever enemy of ours, Count Kato?"

Ted did not speak. Let the Russians accuse him as they would, he did not see any reason why he should condemn himself.

"I do not know much about these matters," went on the officer. "I am of the navy, and only a plain fighting man. But I have reason to guess that you, my Yankee friend, have seriously interfered with the plans of the great and powerful Russian government."

This officer had the same idea that other Russians of his class have. The crushing defeat by Japan has not taught the Czar's officers that they do not still serve the most powerful government on earth.

"There is one aboard," spoke the lieutenant, "who, I am afraid, will feel like making the short remainder of your life very uncomfortable."

The short remainder of life!

That phrase did not escape our hero, but he was prepared, since the night before, to believe that his fate would be a terrible one.

"Who is the one that you speak of?" Ted queried.

"Count Grableff."

"Never heard of him."

"Very likely," smiled Lieutenant Rovsky. "There are many in Russia who have never heard of him. But at St. Petersburg, in some circles, he is very well known indeed."

"One of your high secret service officials, eh?" queried Ted.

"It can do no harm now to admit to you that I have guessed as much," replied the officer. "But I do not know. I do know, though, that our Captain Barskoff and Count

Grablieff are now closeted in the after-cabin. I even guess that they are talking about you."

"About me?"

"Oh, about your serious interference with some of Russia's deepest plans."

"Their talk must be rather interesting," smiled Ted, bravely.

"Perhaps. Doubtless you will hear some of it soon."

"Ah! Then you are keeping me here until they send for me?" divined our hero.

"It may be something like that," nodded Lieutenant Rovsky.

"I shall be interested in meeting this count," Ted went on, thinking of that other count, the grand little Kato, whom he had met in the now far-distant Tokio.

"Very much interested in meeting him, I take it," smiled the young officer. "For Count Grablieff, you know, will be the one who will have the settling of your fate."

"Oh, he will?" cried Ted.

He felt that Lieutenant Rovsky was playing with him, tormenting him all he could by sly suggestion.

That roused and brought out all the American in Ted Terrill.

"I should like to see your Grablieff," declared the boy.

"Oh, would you? Well, under the circumstances, it can do no harm. I think I may be permitted to let you have a look at his excellency, the count. Come, so that you do not interfere with the business that may be going on in the cabin."

Lieutenant Rovsky turned and led the way to one of the open windows of the after-cabin.

Ted, tip-toeing into place, peered through the window.

He saw a rather sumptuous apartment, richly carpeted and expensively furnished.

The room was about fourteen by thirty feet.

There was a large desk at either end of the room. There were book-cases and two large safes.

There were service tables on which stood tea-sets and decanters of vodka, the Russian national liquor.

Captain Barskoff and the tall, elderly looking man who had been with him the night before were seated at the desk nearest to the window at which our hero stood.

Vodka glasses and a box of cigars were at hand. Both men were smoking.

Count Grablieff held spread out before him on the desk a document in five or six long pages.

"So you see, my dear Barskoff," the count was saying, his eyes on the document. "through this Yankee meddler we have lost two of our best agents, two of the men who were best placed and who had the greatest knack for doing the cleverest things. This Yankee meddler has made a hole in our system that will set Russia back for at least a year in some quarters."

As he spoke, Count Grablieff folded the document, thrusting it into an inner pocket.

Then, glancing up, the Russian nobleman saw the faces

of the officer and of the prisoner framed in that open window.

"You may bring the young man in, Lieutenant Rovsky," cried Count Grablieff, betraying neither surprise nor annoyance.

"Come, then, we will go in before their excellencies," suggested the young officer, thrusting his arm through Terrill's.

Together they entered the after-cabin, halting before the desk.

They stood side by side, their arms still linked, as if they were the greatest friends on earth.

"And now, thank you, lieutenant, you may step outside," announced Count Grablieff.

With a prompt salute to both his superiors, Rovsky, of the navy, left the cabin.

Leaning forward, Count Grablieff surveyed Ted Terrill intently.

There was nothing of anger in that look. At least so Ted thought. That was because his acquaintance had never been with the most finished men of the Russian secret service.

"I am listening, if you have anything to say," began the count, after having taken three slow, big puffs at his cigar.

"I have nothing whatever to say," Ted answered, shortly.

"Why not?"

"Because nothing that I can say would do me any good."

"Very true, perhaps."

"I take it that you are a man of wide experience, Count Grablieff," went on the boy, cuttingly. "If it would do me no good to say anything, would it not be foolish of me to speak?"

"It had occurred to me," hinted the count, in an oily tone, "that you might wish to say something to me that would give me a better and kindlier impression of you than I now have."

"I couldn't say anything that would do that," Ted responded, bluntly. "In fact, sir, I am very well aware that the more I say about anything the more of a fool you will think me."

Captain Barskoff laughed softly, while the count, closing his eyes, smoked in silence for a while.

When again Grablieff opened those eyes they were fixed on the boy in the severest scrutiny.

"Very likely you are right in not caring to talk," said the count, easily. "After all, about all that you could tell me would be that you were one of Count Kato's men; that you were assigned to prevent the Japanese naval plans from falling into Russian hands, and that you succeeded. All that I know, so there is no need for you to tell me."

"Then why did you wish me to talk?"

"I see," went on the count, coolly, "that you are so young and lacking experience in the secret service that you do not understand. For the same reason it would not be worth while to explain to you. Come, we will take just a short turn on deck, you and I."

Rising, Grableff took our hero's arm in a mockingly friendly way.

He led Ted out on deck, making a short turn on both sides of the deck, while Lieutenant Rovsky kept alertly at their rear.

Then, once more Grableff led our hero back into the after-cabin.

"Now, Terrill," pronounced Grableff, coolly, "there comes the question of what shall be done with you. This cruiser, touches, next, at Vladivostock, the only port that Russia now has left on the Pacific Ocean. From there we can send you across to Siberia, where you can be put at work, as a convict, in our rather famous Siberian salt mines. I regret to say that the life in the salt mines is but a living death. It is where the Russian government sends the prisoners to whom it wishes to offer the hardest punishment. In those salt mines you would work almost incessantly, and be frequently scourged by the guards.

"The fare is poor there, the sleeping arrangements are purposely of the most uncomfortable sort, and you would rarely see the daylight. In fact, as I have hinted, the Siberian salt mines are a little worse than the infernal regions. Under the life there you would never know the meaning of a moment's comfort. You might last three, possibly four years. That would be about all."

Ted's cheeks, despite his best efforts at courage, had blanched while the count was speaking.

Our hero has read of the hopeless, fearful life of Russian prisoners in the Siberian salt mines.

"You—you speak," he faltered, "as if there would be some other choice."

"At first I had not thought there would be another choice," replied the count, coldly. "But the sight of your youth has moved me to more merciful feelings. We were out on deck just now. You saw, while there, that there is not another single sail in sight anywhere on the sea."

"Yes," Ted admitted.

"Then, if you do not care to face the life in the Siberian salt mines," proposed Count Grableff, a wicked gleam in his eyes, "I offer you one other choice. You may inflict your own punishment by running out this instant and plunging overboard into the water. There you will drown. It is a swifter death than you would find in Siberia."

There was silence in the cabin.

He looked steadily into the eyes of Count Grableff, who met the gaze with equal steadiness.

"I have chosen," declared Ted Terrill, in a strange, hard but steady voice.

"What is it to be?" demanded the count, in a mildly curious voice.

"I shall jump overboard—now!"

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

In that moment of facing certain death Ted Terrill's courage and presence of mind came all to the surface.

There was but a second in which to act.

He moved before either of the others had the slightest glimmer of what was in his mind.

With a leap, Ted landed before Count Grableff.

One sure, swift jerk, and he had snatched that document from the nobleman's inner pocket.

Wheel! Ted was out of that open door like a flash.

Out on the deck Lieutenant Rovsky flew to catch him.

But Ted caught him full with his right fist, slamming the lieutenant against the rail.

Turn! Straight to the nearby stern darted Ted Terrill, with none in the way now to oppose him.

Mounting to the rail, steadyng himself for just an instant by the short flagstaff, Ted leaped far out, overboard.

Ted landed in the water, shooting some feet below the surface.

Then he rose again, to the top, still clutching at that paper.

From the ship he heard a light popping, like the crackling of paper.

Ted could see the marines shooting, yet realized, with a thrill of savage satisfaction, that not one of them was firing his way.

"They've lost me," he gloated. "It's a big loss, too, under the circumstances, or they wouldn't stop and begin shooting in that fashion. Oh, Grableff, I wrung your heart once more in going overboard with this paper!"

Though the document would not be of the slightest use to him in his danger, Ted still clung to it.

And now our hero found himself face to face with his own troubles.

"I'm a good enough swimmer to keep up for half an hour," he muttered. "I may make it for an hour. And then—I've got to drown!"

First of all he tried floating, by rolling over on his back.

"Why, I can manage this for quite a while," he muttered.

Then, as he lay there, on his back in the water, he suddenly opened his eyes very wide.

What was that white object, bobbing over there on the water, some thousand feet away?

Then, suddenly, it began to dawn upon the boy.

That first white object was a conning tower. And now that something else which had followed it into view was the top of the hull of one of those new, dreaded pests of war—a submarine torpedo boat!

From the after flagstaff of the submarine torpedo boat was shaken out the imperial, sun-barred flag of Japan!

Splash! Ted was forging through the rough sea now as fast as he could go.

"Here! Help!" yelled Ted, at his loudest.

He was in despair when he found that his voice did not carry.

As he swam he continued to shout.

At last he saw one of the Japanese officers turn in his direction.

Again Ted shouted, thrusting one arm as far out of the water as he could and waving that fateful document.

Now they saw, as a waving of hands showed.

Then, smoothly, that submarine craft came gliding toward him, over the water.

It came close, a rope was thrown, and Ted Terrill was hauled aboard and led inside the hull of the queer little craft.

"It is most important. My government will be ver-ree glad," smiled Lieutenant Kanabe, commander of the submarine Kitasawa.

That was after our hero had told this smiling little Japanese officer all that had happened, and had exhibited the document that he had snatched from Count Grableff's pocket.

"This is a descriptive list of all the Russian spies in and around Tokio and Yokohama," chuckled Kanabe, gleefully. "Oh, it will be ver-ree important to my government!"

Then the lieutenant stepped out into the conning tower. He was back in a moment.

"The Dimitri Goloskoi is still lying to over there," he chuckled. "The Russian secret service is so fearfully beaten, for once, that those fellows don't know what to do. They might even seek to destroy us. So we are going down below the water."

Almost immediately the Kitasawa began to sink, then began to glide along beneath the waves.

"It was wonderfully fortunate that we happened to be out on a practice trip," laughed the little lieutenant. He could not help laughing all the while, just now. "We should not have come up to the surface that time only we heard so much shooting it made us curious."

"I'm mighty thankful you got curious, then!" shivered Ted, despite the dry, Japanese clothes in which he was now wrapped.

"Of course you will not mind that we turn you over to the police at Yokohama," urged Kanabe. "This is such ver-ree important business that, really, we must."

"What do I care about being turned over to your police," laughed Ted. "It is just the same thing as being turned over to one's friends."

Early in the afternoon the submarine reached Yokohama.

Ted was sent ashore at once, and he was, as had been hinted, turned over to the Yokohama police.

But they very quickly got their instructions from Tokio, and that evening our hero arrived at the Japanese capital, closely guarded, for his own safety, and that of the list of Russian spies, by six little policemen who never flagged in their zeal.

Count Kato, when he received this list of Russian spies, was wild with delight.

Within ten minutes he had set the machinery of the government in operation.

Some of these spies, who were arrested, went to prison.

Others, against whom there was no evidence, were driven out of Japan.

For the first time in modern history Japan was clear for a while at least of Russian spies.

Toko Kama was among the first who came to congratulate our hero.

"How on earth did you ever drag me into this sort of thing, Toko?" questioned Ted.

"Oh, Count Kato, he is my relative, you see," explained the Japanese youth. "For this work it was ver-ree necessary that he have some foreigner, as the Russians could not be fooled by a Japanese. So my relative asked me to look around among the young foreigners."

"Was that why you chummed with me for a week?" quizzed Ted.

"Partly, yes. And partly because I liked you. Now, for to-night, you must come to my home. My father, brother, mother and sister—all eager to meet you."

Ivan Rovsky and the man who had been caught at the dock were quietly, swiftly, sent away to prison for twenty years.

Kong Tow, for pretending to be a Japanese subject, and getting employment in the Naval Department, was sent up for life.

The Chinaman with him was sentenced for ten years.

That was Ted's last stroke in the Japanese secret service. He didn't need to keep to it any longer, for Count Kato, by the Mikado's order, handed him a reward of one hundred thousand yen in cash.

That makes a trifle over fifty thousand dollars in our money.

It is fortune enough for Ted Terrill, for it goes a long way in Japan, where Ted spends most of his time, going once in a while to visit his father at Manila.

Ted is still an American citizen, of course, and some day he will return to the United States.

But when he does, he will bring a Japanese wife with him, for Ted fell before the charms of Miss Cherry Blossom, the daintiest little bit of a Japanese girl, who happened to be Toko Kama's sister.

THE END.

It's a rollicking, rattling, jolly good story that is coming next week, under the title, "HIS NAME WAS DENNIS; OR, THE LUCK OF A GREEN IRISH BOY." It is by A. Howard de Witt, and will be published complete in No. 36 of "The Wide Awake Weekly," out next week! It is a long time since any one has written such a splendidly good story of the adventures of a "green" Irish lad who came over from Erin to battle for fortune in the new but friendly country of the United States. Don't miss this treat.

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